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THE COMPLETE WORKS  
OF WILLIAM HAZLITT IN  
TWENTY-ONE VOLUMES

*CENTENARY EDITION*

*Edited by*  
*P. P. HOWE*

VOLUME NINETEEN



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# THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM HAZLITT

EDITED BY P. P. HOWE

AFTER THE EDITION OF  
A. R. WALLER AND ARNOLD GLOVER



VOLUME NINETEEN

Literary  
and  
Political  
Criticism



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# LITERARY CRITICISM





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## LITERARY CRITICISM

### MME. DE STAËL'S NEW WORK <sup>1</sup>

*The Morning Chronicle.*

November 13, 1813.

WE do not wonder that the censors of the press did not permit this very able production to appear in France. Its chief object seems to be to mortify the natural prejudices and exclusive egotism of the French in literature, by a systematic and galling comparison with the works of the most celebrated German writers, and to establish that balance of power which they are as little inclined to admit in matters of taste and opinion as in political questions. Her work may be considered as the best analysis that has been given of the literary and philosophical productions of the modern Germans, and as the best and most intelligible translation of their literary and philosophical creed. She has very successfully employed the principles of philosophical criticism advanced by Schlegel, Schiller, Goethe, and others, in exposing the necessary defects of French poetry, and has not unfrequently turned their own weapons against themselves. Her opinions and reasonings are undoubtedly for the most part those of the German school; but she has added to them a point, a brilliance, and lightness which they exceedingly wanted before. A work which unites the originality and profundity of German research with the elegance and rapidity of French composition, must be no unimportant accession to European literature. This work is, however, more critical than historical or descriptive—more philosophical than popular; but it is philosophy and criticism in a very graceful and animated form. The political reflections in the work are very few, and their application is by no means direct or obvious. In the analysis of the character of the people of Germany, she seems disposed to reproach them with the contemplative indifference and abstraction of their pursuits, and anxious to rouse them from the lethargy of thought to life and action. She has with great ingenuity commented on the text of one of their own authors, who said that the dominion of the sea belonged to the

<sup>1</sup> *De l'Allemagne*, London, 1813.

## MME. DE STAËL'S NEW WORK

English, that of the land to the French, and *that of the air to the Germans*. She justly considers the general disposition of the people of Germany as contemplative, as delighting in what is remote and ideal, and as tending little to action; and very distinctly accounts for this predominant character from the political circumstances and individual habits of the people, the want of a general impulse and interest in the different states, the number of literary institutions, &c.

‘These small capitals of the north of Germany, where we meet with so many men of the highest character for learning, occupied exclusively with past history and abstract ideas, often afford no kind of amusement; there are no public exhibitions, and little society; time there runs out, as it were, drop by drop, and does not interrupt by its sound the silence and the solitude of thought. The Germans have succeeded in establishing a republic of letters, animated and independent. They supply the want of the interest arising from events by the interest attached to ideas. The citizens of this contemplative republic, disengaged from almost every kind of connection with public and private affairs, labour in obscurity like miners; and like them, surrounded with hidden treasures, explore in silence the intellectual riches of the human race.’

The inconsequentiality of action to thought is strongly depicted by the author as a part of the German character: the theory is at least correct; but she afterwards forgets herself, and represents the *seriousness* of this people, as identifying the two together. *Werter*, she says, has produced numberless suicides, and the *Robbers* of Schiller systematic, sentimental gangs of banditti.

Madame de Staël has pointed out, with great subtlety and clearness, the distinctive characters of the French and German drama, as connected with the knowledge of the world and the spirit of conversation on one hand, or with contemplation and intellectual refinement on the other. She very happily ridicules the imitation of the French school by the German poets, and applies to these servile and lifeless copies the praise which Orlando, in *Ariosto*, bestows upon his horse, ‘who possessed all imaginable excellences, but had one fault, that he was dead.’ With equal felicity she has observed of Kant, whose popular writings were exceedingly obscure, compared with the force and precision of his logical disquisitions, ‘That he resembled the Israelites, who were guided by a pillar of fire by night, and by a cloud by day!’

In her remarks on the German poets, she evidently gives a decided preference to Goethe. In this preference we cannot help suspecting her to have been a little influenced by the extreme reputation of Goethe among his countrymen, as well as by the power of his talents in conversation, which appear to be of a very high order. She gives

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a very amusing description of her first interview with Schiller, in which she undertook, with much warmth, to show the absolute superiority of the French tragedy over every other. Schiller, who had never spoken French, defended himself with such modesty and strength of reasoning, that Madame de Staël immediately conceived equal admiration for his understanding and character. Should it not almost seem by this as if she was willing to maintain the prejudices of the French in Germany, and to retort the discoveries of the Germans upon the French? A little coquetry is perhaps as inseparable from female authorship as from female sovereignty; and women are generally disposed to exact more deference to their caprices than is reasonable in cases which have nothing to do with gallantry. Much of the tone of French literature may undoubtedly be traced to this circumstance.

Except *Werter*, the translations from Goethe into English have not been popular; and *Werter*, Goethe himself, and his admirers, affect to despise. The only passage we could find in Madame de Staël's work which conveys an idea of the powers of this author at all adequate to those which are ascribed to him, is the following :—

‘Among the great number of beautiful passages which might be cited from this work (*Iphigenia in Tauris*) there is one without parallel anywhere else; Iphigenia, in her grief, recollects an old song known in the family, and which her nurse had taught her from her cradle; it is the song which the Fates sing to Tantalus in hell. They recal to him his former state when he sat as guest with the Gods at their golden tables. They describe the dreadful moment when he was hurled from his throne, the punishment inflicted on him by the Gods, the tranquillity which these same Gods enjoy who govern the universe, and which the lamentations of the damned cannot disturb. The Fates announce to the grand-children of Tantalus that the Gods will avert their countenance from them because their features recal those of their father. The aged Tantalus hears the mournful song in the eternal night that surrounds him, thinks of his children, and bows his guilty head. The most striking images, the metre which accords exactly with the sentiments, give to this poem the air of a national tradition. It is one of the greatest efforts of genius thus to identify itself with antiquity, and to combine at the same time all that would have been popular among the Greeks, with all that conveys, after the lapse of ages, the most dreadful solemnity.’ If the original passage answers to this description, it is fine indeed!

That Madame de Staël is not blind to the faults of her favourite author, the following remarks will sufficiently shew.

‘By a singular vicissitude in taste, it has happened that the Germans at first attacked our dramatic writers as converting all their heroes into

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Frenchmen. They have with reason insisted on historic truth as necessary to contrast the colours, and give life to the poetry.—But then, all at once, they have been weary of their own success in this way, and have produced abstract representations in which the relations of mankind were expressed in a general manner, and in which time, place, and circumstance passed for nothing. In a drama of this kind by Goethe, the author calls the different characters, the Duke, the King, the Father, the Daughter, &c., without any other designation.

‘Such a tragedy is only calculated to be acted in the Palace of Odin, where the dead still continue their different occupations on earth; where the hunter, himself a shade, eagerly pursues the shade of a stag, and fantastic warriors combat together in the clouds. It should appear that Goethe, at one period, conceived an absolute disgust to all interest in dramatic compositions. It was sometimes to be met with in bad works; and he concluded that it ought to be banished from good ones. Nevertheless, a man of superior mind ought not to disdain what gives universal pleasure; he cannot relinquish his resemblance with this kind, if he wishes to make others feel his own value. Granting that the tyranny of custom often introduces an artificial air into the best French tragedies, it cannot be denied that there is the same want of natural expression in the systematic and theoretical productions of the German muse. If exaggerated declamation is affected, there is a certain kind of intellectual calm which is not less so. It is a kind of arrogated superiority over the affections of the soul, which may accord very well with philosophy, but is totally out of character in the dramatic art. Goethe’s works are composed according to different principles and systems. In the *Tasso* and *Iphigenia*, he conceives of tragedy as a lofty relic of the monuments of antiquity. These works have all the beauty of form, the splendour and glossy smoothness of marble, but they are as cold and as motionless.’

These remarks are a model of philosophic criticism. We shall only add, that they appear to us to apply in all their force to the *Herman and Dorothea*, and to *Count Egmont*, which are here, however, highly praised. Both these works, which are known to the English reader, are throughout a studied suppression of imagination and natural passion. The author is a poetical ascetic, who avoids the indulgence of his own feelings, and whatever can excite emotion in others, as a violation of the severe rules of composition which he has imposed upon himself. Finding that to produce an effect was not everything, he supposed that not to produce an effect was everything. Finding that Shakespeare had something which Schiller and Kotzebue wanted, he seemed to imagine that not to be Schiller or Kotzebue was to be Shakespeare;—as if a work of genius, like a work of criticism, could be

## MR. WORDSWORTH'S NEW POEM

composed of merely negative qualities, or as if the tragic muse should be invoked only in the spirit of contradiction. Goethe in this determination to please the public in spite of themselves, reminds us of the pedantic lover in the *Inconstant*, who tries to succeed with his mistress 'by philosophical ogling and amorous frowns!'

The style of Madame de Staël in these volumes, is a happy mixture of the two classes of composition, which she herself has so well distinguished as characteristic of different nations, *the classical* and *the romantic*. She writes like a Frenchwoman, but like the daughter of Susan Kürchod.

### CHARACTER OF MR. WORDSWORTH'S NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

*The Examiner.*

August 21, 1814.

IN power of intellect, in lofty conception, in the depth of feeling, at once simple and sublime, which pervades every part of it and which gives to every object an almost preternatural and preterhuman interest, this work has seldom been surpassed. If the subject of the Poem had been equal to the genius of the Poet, if the skill with which he has chosen his materials had accorded with the power exerted over them, if the objects (whether persons or things) which he makes use of as the vehicle of his feelings had been such as immediately and irresistibly to convey them in all their force and depth to others, then the production before us would indeed 'have proved a monument,' as he himself wishes it, worthy of the author, and of his country. Whether, as it is, this most original and powerful performance may not rather remain like one of those stupendous but half-finished structures, which have been suffered to moulder into decay, because the cost and labour attending them exceeded their use or beauty, we feel that it would be rather presumptuous in us to determine.

The Poem of the *Excursion* resembles the country in which the scene is laid. It has the same vastness and magnificence, with the same nakedness and confusion. It has the same overwhelming, oppressive power. It excites or recalls the same sensations which those who have traversed that wonderful scenery must have felt. We are surrounded with the constant sense and superstitious awe of the collective power of matter, of the gigantic and eternal forms of Nature, on which, from the beginning of time, the hand of man has made no impression. Here are no dotted lines, no hedge-row beauties, no box-tree borders, no gravel walks, no square mechanic enclosures. All is left loose and irregular in the rude chaos of aboriginal nature. The boundaries of hill and valley are the Poet's only geography, where



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we wander with him incessantly over deep beds of moss and waving fern amidst the troops of red-deer and wild animals. Such is the severe simplicity of Mr. Wordsworth's taste, that we doubt whether he would not reject a druidical temple, or time-hallowed ruin, as too modern and artificial for his purpose. He only familiarises himself or his readers with a stone, covered with lichens, which has slept in the same spot of ground from the creation of the world, or with the rocky fissure between two mountains caused by thunder, or with a cavern scooped out by the sea. His mind is, as it were, coeval with the primary forms of things, holds immediately from nature; and his imagination 'owes no allegiance' but 'to the elements.'<sup>1</sup>

The *Excursion* may be considered as a philosophical pastoral poem—as a scholastic romance. It is less a poem on the country, than on the love of the country. It is not so much a description of natural objects, as of the feelings associated with them, not an account of the manners of rural life, but the result of the Poet's reflections on it. He does not present the reader with a lively succession of images or incidents, but paints the outgoings of his own heart, the shapings of his own fancy. He may be said to create his own materials; his thoughts are his real subject. His imagination broods over that which is 'without form and void,' and 'makes it pregnant.' He sees all things in his own mind; he contemplates effects in their causes, and passions in their principles. He hardly ever avails himself of striking subjects or remarkable combinations of events, but in general rejects them as interfering with the workings of his own mind, as disturbing the smooth, deep, majestic current of his own feelings. Thus his descriptions of natural scenery are not brought home distinctly to the naked eye by forms and circumstances, but every object is seen through the medium of innumerable recollections, is clothed with the haze of imagination like a glittering vapour, is obscured with the excess of glory, has the shadowy brightness of a waking dream. The object is lost in the sentiment, as sound in the multiplication of echoes—

'And visions, as prophetic eyes avow,  
Hang on each leaf, and cling to every bough.'

In describing human nature, Mr. Wordsworth equally shuns the common 'vantage-grounds of popular story, of striking incident, or fatal catastrophe, as illegitimate or vulgar modes of producing an

<sup>1</sup> Every one wishes to get rid of the booths and bridges in the Park, in order to have a view of the ground and water again. Our Poet looks at the more lasting and serious works of men as baby-houses and toys, and from the greater elevation of his mind, regards them much in the same light as we do the Regent's Fair, and Mr. Vansittart's 'permanent erections.'

## NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

effect. He scans the human race as the naturalist measures the earth's zone, without attending to the picturesque points of view, the inequalities of surface. He contemplates the passions and habits of men, not in their extremes, but in their first elements, their follies and vices, not at their height, with all their embossed evils and putrid sores, but as lurking in embryo, the seeds of the disorder inwoven with our very constitution.<sup>1</sup> He only sympathises with those simple forms of feeling, which mingle at once with his own identity, or with the stream of general humanity. To him the great and the small are the same; the near and the remote; what appears, and what only is. The common and the permanent, like the Platonic ideas, are his only realities. All accidental varieties and individual contrasts are lost in an endless continuity of feeling; like drops of water in the ocean-stream! An intense intellectual egotism swallows up every thing. Even the dialogues introduced in the present volume are soliloquies of the same character, taking different views of the subject. The recluse, the pastor, and the pedlar, are three persons in one poet. We ourselves disapprove of these interlocutions between Lucius and Caius as impertinent babbling, where there is no dramatic distinction of character. But the evident scope and tendency of Mr. Wordsworth's mind is the reverse of dramatic. It resists all change of character, all variety of scenery, all the bustle, machinery, and pantomime of the stage, or of real life,—whatever might relieve or relax or change the direction of its own activity, jealous of all competition. The power of his mind preys upon itself. It is as if there were nothing but himself and the universe. He lives in the busy solitude of his own heart; in the deep silence of thought. His imagination lends life and feeling only to 'the bare trees and mountains bare'; peoples the viewless tracts of air, and converses with the silent clouds!

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

*The Examiner.*

*August 28, 1814.*

WE could have wished that Mr. Wordsworth had given to his work the form of a philosophic poem altogether, with only occasional digressions or allusions to particular instances. There is in his general sentiments and reflections on human life a depth, an originality, a truth, a beauty, and grandeur, both of conception and expression, which place him decidedly at the head of the poets of the present day, or rather which place him in a totally distinct class of excellence.

<sup>1</sup> 'God knew Adam in the elements of his chaos, and saw him in the great obscurity of nothing.'—*Sir Thomas Browne.*

## CHARACTER OF MR. WORDSWORTH'S

But he has chosen to encumber himself with a load of narrative and description, which, instead of assisting, hinders the progress and effect of the general reasoning. Almost all this part of the work, which Mr. Wordsworth has inwoven with the text, would have come in better in plain prose as notes at the end. Indeed, there is something evidently inconsistent, upon his own principles, in the construction of the poem. For he professes, in these ambiguous illustrations, to avoid all that is striking or extraordinary—all that can raise the imagination or affect the passions—all that is not every way common, and necessarily included in the natural workings of the passions in all minds and in all circumstances. Then why introduce particular illustrations at all, which add nothing to the force of the general truth, which hang as a dead weight upon the imagination, which degrade the thought and weaken the sentiment, and the connection of which with the general principle it is more difficult to find out than to understand the general principle itself? It is only by an extreme process of abstraction that it is often possible to trace the operation of the general law in the particular illustration, yet it is to supply the defect of abstraction that the illustration is given. Mr. Wordsworth, indeed, says finely, and perhaps as truly as finely :

‘ Exchange the Shepherd’s frock of native grey  
For robes with regal purple tinged ; convert  
The crook into a sceptre ; give the pomp  
Of circumstance ; and here the tragic Muse  
Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.  
Amid the groves, beneath the shadowy hills,  
The generations are prepared ; the pangs,  
The internal pangs, are ready ; the dread strife  
Of poor humanity’s afflicted will  
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny.’

But he immediately after declines to avail himself of these resources of the rustic moralist : for the Priest, who officiates as ‘ the sad historian of the pensive plain ’ says in reply—

‘ Our system is not fashioned to preclude  
That sympathy which you for others ask ;  
And I could tell, not travelling for my theme  
Beyond the limits of these humble graves,  
Of strange disasters ; but I pass them by,  
Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hushed to peace.’

There is, in fact, in Mr. Wordsworth’s mind (if we may hazard the conjecture) a repugnance to admit any thing that tells for itself, without the interpretation of the poet,—a fastidious antipathy to immediate effect,—a systematic unwillingness to share the palm with

## NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

his subject. Where, however, he has a subject presented to him, 'such as the meeting soul may pierce,' and to which he does not grudge to lend the aid of his fine genius, his powers of description and fancy seem to be little inferior to those of thought and sentiment. Among several others which we might select, we give the following passage, describing the religion of ancient Greece :

' In that fair clime, the lonely Herdsman, stretch'd  
On the soft grass through half a summer's day,  
With music lulled his indolent repose :  
And in some fit of weariness, if he,  
When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear  
A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds  
Which his poor skill could make, his Fancy fetch'd,  
Even from the blazing Chariot of the Sun,  
A beardless Youth, who touched a golden lute,  
And filled the illumined groves with ravishment.  
The nightly Hunter, lifting up his eyes  
Towards the crescent Moon, with grateful heart  
Called on the lovely wanderer, who bestowed  
That timely light, to share his joyous sport :  
And hence, a beaming Goddess with her Nymphs  
Across the lawn and through the darksome grove,  
(Nor unaccompanied with tuneful notes  
By echo multiplied from rock or cave),  
Swept in the storm of chase, as Moon and Stars  
Glance rapidly along the clouded heavens,  
When winds are blowing strong. The Traveller slaked  
His thirst from rill, or gushing fount, and thanked  
The Naiad.—Sun beams, upon distant hills  
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,  
Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed  
Into fleet Orcads, sporting visibly.  
The Zephyrs fanning as they passed their wings  
Lacked not for love fair objects, whom they wooed  
With gentle whisper. Withered boughs grotesque,  
Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,  
From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth  
In the low vale, or on steep mountain side :  
And sometimes intermixed with stirring horns  
Of the live Deer, or Goat's depending beard ;  
These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood  
Of gamesome Deities ! or Pan himself,  
The simple Shepherd's awe-inspiring God.'

The foregoing is one of a succession of splendid passages equally enriched with philosophy and poetry, tracing the fictions of Eastern mythology to the immediate intercourse of the imagination with Nature, and to the habitual propensity in the human mind to endow the outward forms of being with life and conscious motion. With this expansive and animating principle, Mr. W. has forcibly, but

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somewhat severely, contrasted the cold, narrow, lifeless spirit of modern philosophy :

' Now, shall our great discoverers obtain  
From sense and reason less than these obtained,  
Though far misled? Shall men for whom our age  
Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,  
To explore the world without and world within,  
Be joyless as the blind? Ambitious souls—  
Whom earth at this late season hath produced  
To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh  
The planets in the hollow of their hand;  
And they who rather dive than soar, whose pains  
Have solved the elements, or analysed  
The thinking principle—shall they in fact  
Prove a degraded race? And what avails  
Renown, if their presumption make them such?  
Inquire of ancient wisdom; go, demand  
Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant  
That we should pry far off, yet be unraised;  
That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,  
Viewing all objects unremittingly  
In disconnection dead and spiritless;  
And still dividing and dividing still  
Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied  
With the perverse attempt, while littleness  
May yet become more little; waging thus  
An impious warfare with the very life  
Of our own souls!—And if indeed there be  
An all-pervading spirit, upon whom  
Our dark foundations rest, could he design,  
That this magnificent effect of power,  
The Earth we tread, the Sky which we behold  
By day, and all the pomp which night reveals,  
That these—and that superior mystery,  
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,  
And the dread soul within it—should exist  
Only to be examined, pondered, searched,  
Probed, vexed, and criticised? '—Or be prized  
' No more than as a mirror that reflects  
To proud self-love her own intelligence? '

From the chemists and metaphysicians our author turns to the laughing sage of France, Voltaire. 'Poor gentleman, it fares no better with him, for he's a wit.'<sup>1</sup> We cannot, however, agree with Mr. Wordsworth that *Candide* is *dull*. It is, if our author pleases, 'the production of a scoffer's pen,' or it is any thing, but dull. *Rasselas* indeed is dull; but then it is privileged dulness. It may not be proper in a grave, discreet, orthodox, promising young divine, who studies his opinions in the contraction or distension of his patron's

<sup>1</sup> Love in a Wood.

## NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

brow, to allow any merit to a work like *Candide*; but we conceive that it would have been more in character, that is more manly in Mr. Wordsworth, nor do we think it would have hurt the cause he espouses, if he had blotted out the epithet, after it had peevishly escaped him. Whatsoever savours of a little, narrow, inquisitorial spirit, does not sit well on a poet and a man of genius. The prejudices of a philosopher are not natural. There is a frankness and sincerity of opinion, which is a paramount obligation in all questions of intellect, though it may not govern the decisions of the Spiritual Courts, who may be safely left to take care of their own interests. There is a plain directness and simplicity of understanding, which is the only security against the evils of levity on the one hand, or of hypocrisy on the other. A speculative bigot is a solecism in the intellectual world. We can assure Mr. W. that we should not have bestowed so much serious consideration on a single voluntary perversion of language, but that our respect for his character makes us jealous of his smallest faults.

With regard to his general philippic against the contractedness and egotism of philosophical pursuits, we only object to its not being carried further. We shall not affirm with Rousseau (his authority would perhaps have little weight with Mr. Wordsworth)—*Tout homme reflechi est mechant*; but we conceive that the same reasoning which Mr. Wordsworth applies so eloquently and justly to the natural philosopher and metaphysician may be extended to the moralist, the divine, the politician, the orator, the artist, and even the poet. And why so? Because wherever an intense activity is given to any one faculty, it necessarily prevents the due and natural exercise of others. The intellectual and the moral faculties of man are different; the ideas of things and the feelings of pleasure and pain connected with them. Hence all those professions or pursuits, where the mind is exclusively occupied with the ideas of things, as they exist in the imagination or understanding, as they call for the exercise of intellectual activity, and not as they are connected with pleasure or pain, must check the genial expansion of the moral sentiments and social affections, must lead to a cold and dry abstraction, as they are found to suspend the animal functions, and relax the bodily frame. Hence the complaint of the want of natural sensibility and constitutional warmth of attachment in those persons who have been devoted to the pursuit of any art or science,—of their restless dissatisfied activity, and indifference to every thing that does not furnish an occasion for the display of their intellectual superiority and the gratification of their vanity. The philosophical poet himself, perhaps, owes some of his love of nature to the opportunity it affords

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him of analysing his own feelings and contemplating his own powers,—of making every object about him a whole length mirror to reflect his favourite thoughts, and of looking down on the frailties of others in undisturbed leisure, and from a more dignified height.

One of the most interesting parts of this work is that in which the author treats of the French Revolution, and of the feelings connected with it in ingenuous minds, in its commencement and its progress. The Solitary, who by domestic calamities and disappointments had been cut off from society and almost from himself, gives the following account of the manner in which he was roused from his melancholy :—

' From that abstraction I was roused—and how ?  
Even as a thoughtful Shepherd by a flash  
Of lightning, startled in a gloomy cave  
Of these wild hills. For, lo ! the dread Bastile,  
With all the chambers in its horrid towers,  
Fell to the ground : by violence o'erthrown  
Of indignation ; and with shouts that drowned  
The crash it made in falling ! From the wreck  
A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,  
The appointed seat of equitable law  
And mild paternal sway. The potent shock  
I felt ; the transformation I perceived,  
As marvellously seized as in that moment,  
When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld  
Glory—beyond all glory ever seen,  
Dazzling the soul ! Meanwhile, prophetic harps  
In every grove were ringing, " War shall cease :  
Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured ?  
Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers, to deck  
The Tree of Liberty ! "—My heart rebounded :  
My melancholy voice the chorus joined.  
Thus was I reconverted to the world ;  
Society became my glittering bride,  
And airy hopes my children. From the depths  
Of natural passion seemingly escaped,  
My soul diffused itself in wide embrace  
Of institutions and the forms of things.

—If with noise  
And acclamation, crowds in open air  
Expressed the tumult of their minds, my voice  
There mingled, heard or not. And in still groves,  
Where wild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay  
Of thanks and expectation, in accord  
With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule  
Returned—a progeny of golden years  
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.

Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed !  
But history, time's lavish scribe, will tell

## NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

How rapidly the zealots of the cause  
Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appeared :  
Some, tired of honest service; these outdone,  
Disgusted, therefore, or appalled by aims  
Of fiercer zealots.—So confusion reigned,  
And the more faithful were compelled to exclaim,  
As Brutus did to virtue, “ Liberty,  
I worshipped thee, and find thee but a shade ! ”  
Such recantation had for me no charm,  
Nor would I bend to it.’

The subject is afterwards resumed, with the same magnanimity and philosophical firmness :

——‘ For that other loss,  
The loss of confidence in social man,  
By the unexpected transports of our age  
Carried so high, that every thought which looked  
Beyond the temporal destiny of the kind—  
To many seemed superfluous; as no cause  
For such exalted confidence could e’er  
Exist; so, none is now for such despair.  
The two extremes are equally remote  
From truth and reason; do not, then, confound  
One with the other, but reject them both;  
And choose the middle point, whereon to build  
Sound expectations. This doth he advise  
Who shared at first the illusion.—At this day,  
When a Tartarian darkness overspreads  
The groaning nations; when the Impious rule,  
By will or by established ordinance,  
Their own dire agents, and constrain the Good  
To acts which they abhor; though I bewail  
This triumph, yet the pity of my heart  
Prevents me not from owning that the law,  
By which mankind now suffers, is most just.  
For by superior energies; more strict  
Affiance in each other; faith more firm  
In their unhallowed principles, the Bad  
Have fairly earned a victory o’er the weak,  
The vacillating, inconsistent Good.’

In the application of these memorable lines, we should perhaps differ a little from Mr. Wordsworth; nor can we indulge with him in the fond conclusion afterwards hinted at, that one day *our* triumph, the triumph of virtue and liberty, may be complete. For this purpose, we think several things necessary which are impossible. It is a consummation which cannot happen till the nature of things is changed, till the many become as the *one*, till romantic generosity shall be as common as gross selfishness, till reason shall have acquired the obstinate blindness of prejudice, till the love of power and of change shall no longer goad man on to restless action,



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till passion and will, hope and fear, love and hatred, and the objects proper to excite them, that is, alternate good and evil, shall no longer sway the bosoms and businesses of men. All things move not in progress, but in a ceaseless round; our strength lies in our weakness; our virtues are built on our vices; our faculties are as limited as our being; nor can we lift man above his nature more than above the earth he treads. But though we cannot weave over again the airy, unsubstantial dream, which reason and experience have dispelled—

'What though the radiance, which was once so bright,  
Be now for ever taken from our sight,  
Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of glory in the grass, of splendour in the flower':—

yet we will never cease, nor be prevented from returning on the wings of imagination to that bright dream of our youth; that glad dawn of the day-star of liberty; that spring-time of the world, in which the hopes and expectations of the human race seemed opening in the same gay career with our own; when France called her children to partake her equal blessings under her laughing skies; when the stranger was met in all her villages with dance and festive songs, in celebration of a new and golden era; and when, to the retired and contemplative student, the prospects of human happiness and glory were seen ascending, like the steps of Jacob's ladder, in bright and never-ending succession. The dawn of that day was suddenly overcast; that season of hope is past; it is fled with the other dreams of our youth, which we cannot recal, but has left behind it traces, which are not to be effaced by birth-day odes, or the chaunting of *Te Deums* in all the churches of Christendom. To those hopes eternal regrets are due; to those who maliciously and wilfully blasted them, in the fear that they might be accomplished, we feel no less what we owe—hatred and scorn as lasting.

## THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

*The Examiner.*

October 2, 1814.

POETRY may be properly divided into two classes; the poetry of imagination and the poetry of sentiment. The one consists in the power of calling up images of the most pleasing or striking kind; the other depends on the strength of the interest which it excites in given objects. The one may be said to arise out of the faculties of memory and invention, conversant with the world of external nature; the other from the fund of our moral sensibility. In the combination of these different excellences, the perfection of poetry consists; the greatest poets of our own and other countries have been equally dis-

## NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

tinguished for richness of invention and depth of feeling. By the greatest poets of our own country, we mean Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton, who evidently possessed both kinds of imagination, the intellectual and moral, in the highest degree. Young and Cowley might be cited as the most brilliant instances of the separation of feeling from fancy, of men who were dazzled by the exuberance of their own thoughts and whose genius was sacrificed to their want of taste. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, whose powers of feeling are of the highest order, is certainly deficient in fanciful invention : his writings exhibit all the internal power, without the external form of poetry. He has none of the pomp and decoration and scenic effect of poetry : no gorgeous palaces nor solemn temples awe the imagination : no cities rise with glistening spires and pinnacles adorned : we meet with no knights pricked forth on airy steeds : no hair-breadth scapes and perilous accidents by flood or field. Either from the predominant habit of his mind, not requiring the stimulus of outward impressions, or from the want of an imagination teeming with various forms, he takes the common everyday events and objects of Nature, or rather seeks those that are the most simple and barren of effect ; but he adds to them a weight of interest from the resources of his own mind, which makes the most insignificant things serious and even formidable. All other interests are absorbed in the deeper interest of his own thoughts, and find the same level. His mind magnifies the littleness of his subject, and raises its meanness ; lends it his strength, and clothes it with borrowed grandeur. With him, a mole-hill, covered with wild thyme, assumes the importance of ' the great vision of the guarded mount ' : a puddle is filled with preternatural faces, and agitated with the fiercest storms of passion ; and to his mind, as he himself informs us, and as we can easily believe,

' — The meanest flow'r that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.'

The extreme simplicity which some persons have objected to in Mr. Wordsworth's poetry is to be found only in the subject and the style : the sentiments are subtle and profound. In the latter respect, his poetry is as much above the common standard or capacity, as in the other it is below it. His poems bear a distant resemblance to some of Rembrandt's landscapes, who, more than any other painter, created the medium through which he saw Nature, and out of the stump of an old tree, a break in the sky, and a bit of water, could produce an effect almost miraculous.

Mr. Wordsworth's poems in general are the history of a refined and contemplative mind, conversant only with itself and nature.

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intense feeling of the associations of this kind is the peculiar and characteristic feature of all his productions. He has described the love of nature better than any other poet. This sentiment, inly felt in all its force, and sometimes carried to an excess, is the source both of his strength and of his weakness.—However we may sympathise with Mr. Wordsworth in his attachment to groves and fields, we cannot extend the same admiration to their inhabitants, or to the manners of country life in general. We go along with him, while he is the subject of his own narrative, but we take leave of him when he makes pedlars and ploughmen his heroes and the interpreters of his sentiments. It is, we think, getting into low company, and company, besides, that we do not like. We take Mr. Wordsworth himself for a great poet, a fine moralist, and a deep philosopher; but if he insists on introducing us to a friend of his, a parish clerk, or the barber of the village, who is as wise as himself, we must be excused if we draw back with some little want of cordial faith. We are satisfied with the friendship which subsisted between *Parson Adams* and *Joseph Andrews*.—The author himself lets out occasional hints that all is not as it should be amongst these northern Arcadians :

‘How gay the habitations that adorn  
This fertile valley! Not a house but seems  
To give assurance of content within;  
Embosomed happiness, and placid love;  
As if the sunshine of the day were met  
With answering brightness in the hearts of all  
Who walk this favoured ground. But chance regards,  
And notice forced upon incurious ears;  
These, if these only, acting in despite  
Of the encomiums by my friend pronounced  
On humble life, forbid the judging mind  
To trust the smiling aspect of this fair  
And noiseless Commonwealth. The simple race  
Of Mountaineers, by nature’s self removed  
From foul temptations, and by constant care  
Of a good shepherd tended, as themselves  
Do tend their flocks, these share Man’s general lot  
With little mitigation. They escape,  
Perchance, guilt’s heavier woes; and do not feel  
The tedium of fantastic idleness:  
Yet life, as with the multitude, with them  
Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale;  
That on the outset wastes its gay desires,  
Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,  
And pleasant interests—for the sequel leaving  
Old things repeated with diminished grace;  
And all the laboured novelties at best  
Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power  
Evince the want and weakness whence they spring.’

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Though Mr. Wordsworth professes to soften the harsher features of rustic vice, he has given us one picture of depraved and inveterate selfishness, which we apprehend could only be found among the inhabitants of these boasted mountain districts. The account of one of his heroines concludes as follows :—

‘ A sudden illness seiz’d her in the strength  
Of life’s autumnal season.—Shall I tell  
How on her bed of death the Matron lay,  
To Providence submissive, so she thought;  
But fretted, vexed, and wrought upon—almost  
To anger, by the malady that griped  
Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power,  
As the fierce eagle fastens on the Lamb.  
She prayed, she moaned—her Husband’s Sister watched  
Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs;  
And yet the very sound of that kind foot  
Was anguish to her ears !—“ And must she rule  
Sole Mistress of this house when I am gone ?  
Sit by my fire—possess what I possessed—  
Tend what I tended—calling it her own ! ”  
Enough ;—I fear, too much. Of nobler feeling  
Take this example :—One autumnal evening,  
While she was yet in prime of health and strength,  
I well remember, while I passed her door,  
Musing with loitering step, and upward eye  
Turned tow’rds the planet Jupiter, that hung  
Above the centre of the vale, a voice  
Roused me, her voice ;—it said, “ That glorious Star  
In its untroubled element will shine  
As now it shines, when we are laid in earth,  
And safe from all our sorrows.”—She is safe,  
And her uncharitable acts, I trust,  
And harsh unkindnesses, are all forgiven ;  
Though, in this vale, remembered with deep awe ! ’

We think it is pushing our love or admiration of natural objects a good deal too far, to make it a set-off against a story like the preceding, which carries that concentration of self-interest and callousness to the feelings of others to its utmost pitch, which is the general character of those who are cut off by their mountains and valleys from an intercourse with mankind, even more than of the country-people.

All country people hate each other. They have so little comfort that they envy their neighbours the smallest pleasure or advantage, and nearly grudge themselves the necessities of life. From not being accustomed to enjoyment, they become hardened and averse to it—stupid for want of thought—selfish for want of society. There is nothing good to be had in the country, or, if there is, they will not

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let you have it. They had rather injure themselves than oblige any one else. The common mode of life is a system of wretchedness and self-denial, like what you read of among barbarous tribes. You live out of the world. You cannot get your tea and sugar without sending to the next town for it : you pay double, and have it of the worst quality. The small-beer is sure to be sour—the milk skimmed—the meat bad, or spoiled in the cooking. You cannot do a single thing you like ; you cannot walk out or sit at home, or write or read, or think or look as if you did, without being subject to impertinent curiosity. The apothecary annoys you with his complaisance ; the parson with his superciliousness. If you are poor, you are despised ; if you are rich, you are feared and hated. If you do any one a favour, the whole neighbourhood is up in arms ; the clamour is like that of a rookery ; and the person himself, it is ten to one, laughs at you for your pains, and takes the first opportunity of shewing you that he labours under no uneasy sense of obligation. There is a perpetual round of mischief-making and backbiting for want of any better amusement. There are no shops, no taverns, no theatres, no opera, no concerts, no pictures, no public-buildings, no crowded streets, no noise of coaches, or of courts of law,—neither courtiers nor courtesans, no literary parties, no fashionable routs, no society, no books, or knowledge of books. Vanity and luxury are the civilisers of the world, and sweeteners of human life. Without objects either of pleasure or action, it grows harsh and crabbed : the mind becomes stagnant, the affections callous, and the eye dull. Man left to himself soon degenerates into a very disagreeable person. Ignorance is always bad enough ; but rustic ignorance is intolerable. Aristotle has observed, that tragedy purifies the affections by terror and pity. If so, a company of tragedians should be established at the public expence, in every village or hundred, as a better mode of education than either Bell's or Lancaster's. The benefits of knowledge are never so well understood as from seeing the effects of ignorance, in their naked, undisguised state, upon the common country people. Their selfishness and insensibility are perhaps less owing to the hardships and privations, which make them, like people out at sea in a boat, ready to devour one another, than to their having no idea of anything beyond themselves and their immediate sphere of action. They have no knowledge of, and consequently can take no interest in, any thing which is not an object of their senses, and of their daily pursuits. They hate all strangers, and have generally a nick-name for the inhabitants of the next village. The two young noblemen in Guzman d'Alfarache, who went to visit their mistresses only a league out of Madrid, were set upon by the peasants, who came round

## NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

them calling out, '*A wolf.*' Those who have no enlarged or liberal ideas, can have no disinterested or generous sentiments. Persons who are in the habit of reading novels and romances, are compelled to take a deep interest in, and to have their affections strongly excited by, fictitious characters and imaginary situations; their thoughts and feelings are constantly carried out of themselves, to persons they never saw, and things that never existed: history enlarges the mind, by familiarising us with the great vicissitudes of human affairs, and the catastrophes of states and kingdoms; the study of morals accustoms us to refer our actions to a general standard of right and wrong; and abstract reasoning, in general, strengthens the love of truth, and produces an inflexibility of principle which cannot stoop to low trick and cunning. Books, in Lord Bacon's phrase, are 'a discipline of humanity.' Country people have none of these advantages, nor any others to supply the place of them. Having no circulating libraries to exhaust their love of the marvellous, they amuse themselves with fancying the disasters and disgraces of their particular acquaintance. Having no hump-backed *Richard* to excite their wonder and abhorrence, they make themselves a bug-bear of their own, out of the first obnoxious person they can lay their hands on. Not having the fictitious distresses and gigantic crimes of poetry to stimulate their imagination and their passions, they vent their whole stock of spleen, malice, and invention, on their friends and next-door neighbours. They get up a little pastoral drama at home, with fancied events, but real characters. All their spare time is spent in manufacturing and propagating the lie for the day, which does its office, and expires. The next day is spent in the same manner. It is thus that they embellish the simplicity of rural life! The common people in civilised countries are a kind of domesticated savages. They have not the wild imagination, the passions, the fierce energies, or dreadful vicissitudes of the savage tribes, nor have they the leisure, the indolent enjoyments and romantic superstitions, which belonged to the pastoral life in milder climates, and more remote periods of society. They are taken out of a state of nature, without being put in possession of the refinements of art. The customs and institutions of society cramp their imaginations without giving them knowledge. If the inhabitants of the mountainous districts described by Mr. Wordsworth are less gross and sensual than others, they are more selfish. Their egotism becomes more concentrated, as they are more insulated, and their purposes more inveterate, as they have less competition to struggle with. The weight of matter which surrounds them, crushes the finer sympathies. Their minds become hard and cold, like the rocks which they cultivate. The immensity of their mountains makes the

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human form appear little and insignificant. Men are seen crawling between Heaven and earth, like insects to their graves. Nor do they regard one another more than flies on a wall. Their physiognomy expresses the materialism of their character, which has only one principle—rigid self-will. They move on with their eyes and fore-heads fixed, looking neither to the right nor to the left, with a heavy slouch in their gait, and seeming as if nothing would divert them from their path. We do not admire this plodding pertinacity, always directed to the main chance. There is nothing which excites so little sympathy in our minds, as exclusive selfishness.—If our theory is wrong, at least it is taken from pretty close observation, and is, we think, confirmed by Mr. Wordsworth's own account.

Of the stories contained in the latter part of the volume, we like that of the Whig and Jacobite friends, and of the good knight, Sir Alfred Irthing, the best. The last reminded us of a fine sketch of a similar character in the beautiful poem of *Hart Leap Well*. We conceive that about as many fine things have passed through Mr. Wordsworth's mind as, with five or six exceptions, through any human mind whatever. The conclusion of the passage we refer to is admirable, and comes in like some dying close in music:—

“ So fails, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,”  
The grey-haired Wanderer pensively exclaimed,  
“ All that this world is proud of. From their spheres  
The stars of human glory are cast down;  
Perish the roses and the flowers of Kings,  
Princes, and Emperors, and the crowns and palms  
Of all the Mighty, withered and consumed !  
Nor is power given to the lowliest innocence  
Long to protect her own. The man himself  
Departs; and soon is spent the line of those  
Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,  
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,  
Did most resemble him. Degrees and ranks,  
Fraternities and Orders—heaping high  
New wealth upon the burthen of the old,  
And placing trust in privilege confirmed  
And re-confirmed—are scoffed at with a smile  
Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand  
Of Desolation, aimed; to slow decline  
These yield, and these to sudden overthrow :  
Their virtue, service, happiness, and state  
Expire; and Nature's pleasant robe of green,  
Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps  
Their monuments and their memory. The vast Frame  
Of social nature changes evermore  
Her organs and her members, with decay  
Restless, and restless generation, powers  
And functions dying and produced at need,—

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And by this law the mighty Whole subsists :  
With an ascent and progress in the main ;  
Yet, oh ! how disproportioned to the hopes  
And expectations of self-flattering minds ! ”

If Mr. Wordsworth does not always write in this manner, it is his own fault. He can as often as he pleases. It is not in our power to add to, or take away from, the pretensions of a poem like the present, but if our opinion or wishes could have the least weight, we would take our leave of it by saying—*Esto perpetua !*

## CHARLEMAGNE : OU L'ÉGLISE DÉLIVRÉE

*The Champion.*

December 18, 1814.

It seldom happens that the same family produces an emperour and an epic poet. So it is, however, in the present instance. The brother of Buonaparte may be allowed to take his rank among poets, as Buonaparte himself has done among kings. But the historian of Charlemagne does not appear to us to present quite the same formidable front to the established possessors of the seats of the muses, as the imitator of Charlemagne did to the hereditary occupiers of thrones. A self-will without controul, an ambition without bounds, a gigantic daring which built its confidence of success on the contempt of danger, were the means by which Buonaparte obtained and lost his portentous power ; and by which he would probably have lost it on the borders of the Ganges, or among the sands of the Red Sea, if he had not been prevented by the snows of Russia.

Our poet is not the same monster of genius that his brother was of power. In the career of fame, he does not risk the success of his reputation by the unlimited extravagance of his pretensions. His muse does not disdain to borrow the conceptions of others, or to submit to the rules of art ; and the boldest flights of his imagination seldom pass the bounds of a well-regulated enthusiasm. *Charlemagne* is the work of a very clever man, rather than a great poet ; it displays more talent than genius, more ingenuity than invention. It is more artificial than original. In saying this, we would not be understood to mean, that it is without considerable novelty, either of description or sentiment. Far, very far from it : almost every page presents examples of both, equally striking and elegant, which it would be difficult to refer immediately to any similar passages in other authors. But the whole wants character : it does not bear the stamp of the same presiding mind : no new world of imagination is opened to the view : we do not



## CHARLEMAGNE: OU L'ÉGLISE DÉLIVRÉE

feel the presence of a power which we have never felt before, and which we can never forget.

The stanzas are all equally or proportionably good : but they are as good separately, as taken together : they do not run into one another ; they do not make a poem. There is no strong impulse given, no overpowering grandeur of effect. In scarcely any part of the story does the mind look back with terror and delight at what is past, or hurry on with eager curiosity to what is to come. The art is too apparent. The author is too busy in managing his materials, in selecting, adorning, varying, and amplifying them to the best advantage : but they seem something external to him. His subject has not taken entire possession of his mind, and therefore he does not take full possession of his readers. Yet it is certain that all the materials of poetry are here ;—imagery, incident, character, passion, thought, and observation—all but the divine enthusiasm of the poet, which can alone communicate true warmth and enthusiasm to others.

There is one praise which we most willingly bestow on this poem, which is, that it is not *French*. It is not another HENRIADE :—that is, it is not poetry devoid of all imagination, and of every thing like imagination. On the contrary, it abounds with variety and distinctness of conception, and is evidently written on the model of Italian poetry. We were a little surprised to find that the author had not adopted the common heroic French verse, but has borrowed the Italian Stanza with varying rhymes, and a little half verse in the middle, which has an agreeable effect enough in the lighter parts of the poem, but does not accord so well with the more serious and impressive. The following stanzas will give our readers an idea of the metre, and of the general style of description.—They represent Charlemagne traversing the Alps the night before a battle.

' Au dessus du mont Jove, un mont plus escarpé  
S'élançait dans la nue, et sa cime effrayante  
N'offre point des sentiers la trace rassurante.  
Par les vents orageux sans cesse il est frappé.  
Ici, plus de forêts, plus de germe de vie :  
Sur la surface unie  
L'ardente canicule en vain darde ses feux :  
Des glaçons entassés (pyramide éternelle !)  
Étouffent la nature ; et dans ces tristes lieux,  
A sa fécondité la terre est infidèle.

C'est par là qu'aujourd'hui Charles s'ouvre un passage,  
Les coursiers délaissés errent dans le vallon :  
Et pas mille détours le terrible escadron  
Avance lentement sur la pente sauvage.  
L'astre des nuits suivait son cours silencieux ;  
Les vents impétueux

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Entrechoquant par fois les lances formidables,  
S'opposaient vainement à ces audacieux,  
Qui suivant de leur chef les pas infatigables,  
Touchent enfin le sol du piton sourcilleux.

En cercles resserrés près du fils de Pepin,  
Ses dignes compagnons au loin jettent la vue  
Sur une ténébreuse et profonde étendue  
De mobiles vapeurs, de nuages sans fin.  
Appuyés sur leur glaive ils dominent la sphere  
Où le bruyant tonnerre  
S'allume par le choc des principes divers.  
Le barde peint ainsi les ombres eclatantes  
D'Oscar et de l'ingal errant au haut des airs,  
Et brandissant encor leurs lances flamboyantes.

Tels, auprès d'Ilion, les dieux enfants d'Homère,  
Franchissant de l'Ida les sommets ébranlés,  
Près du fils de Saturne en foule rassemblés,  
Sont décrits préparant les destins de la terre.  
Ces fantômes divins furent jadis des preux :  
Les siècles ténébreux,  
Osant de Jéhova dénaturer l'image,  
Dressèrent des autels aux héros fabuleux : <sup>1</sup>  
Et de l'idolatrie affirmissant l'ouvrage,  
De ces guerriers obscurs <sup>1</sup> Homère fit de dieux

Ainsi les paladins, environnant leur roi,' etc.  
*Chant huitieme.*

We might refer to many other passages equally picturesque, though perhaps to none so poetical. Such as the comparison of Roland taken from the scene of combat by Oliver, to a lion led off by an African, that still roars as he follows his well-known guide;—the first appearance of Armelie, the death of Wilfred at the altar, the vanishing of Adelard from the sight of Charlemagne, the forest of Eresbourg, the Druidical sacrifice, and the funeral rites of Orlando in the valley of Ronscevalles.

The language of the poem often bears a striking resemblance to the language of painting, or seems like a detailed description of some *chef d'œuvre* of the art, rather than the creation of the poet's fancy. We should have little doubt that the solitary church in the valley of Ronscevalles is copied from that in the background of Titian's *St. Peter Martyr*, and the massacre at the altar in the first canto is certainly taken from some picture of Raphael!

In the sentiments of this poem there is more feebleness, a greater

<sup>1</sup> Why fabulous or obscure?

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number of Gallicisms, than in the imagery. We meet with such courtly expressions as these :

' Les Francs à chaque instant voient de nouveaux guerriers  
Solliciter l'honneur d'embrasser leur défense ! '

The devil addresses the deity with the following piece of high-flown sentimentality :

' Pour braver les remords, et la gêne et la flamme,  
Je ne demande rien *qu'un seul rayon d'espoir.* '

We know, indeed, from whence the allusion is taken, and we wonder the more at the affectation implied in the alteration. It is like some of Pope's refinements on Isaiah. In giving an account of the sorrow which prevails in heaven at the disasters of the church of Christ, the author has expressed a trite theological sentiment with more felicity than we recollect to have seen it expressed before :

' On entend à ces mots toutes les voix célestes  
D'une douce tristesse exhaler les soupirs.  
La harpe ainsi murmure au souffle des zéphirs.  
Les habitants du ciel n'ont point ces sons funestes—  
Qu'ici-bas les malheurs arrachent aux humains.  
Aux peines, aux chagrins,  
Aux passions du monde ils ne sont plus en proie ;  
D'un amour sans mélange ils goûtent la douceur :  
Leurs maux sont moins amers, plus purs que notre joie ;  
Et leur tristesse à peine altère leur bonheur. '

The conception of his Heaven is much more just than that of Hell, though the execution is (almost as a matter of course) less powerful. The two figures of Adam and Moses, in the former, are particularly fine :

' Le père des humains voit sa nombreuse race,  
Et calcule, pensif, le nombre des élus !  
Moïse près de lui, d'un seul regard embrasse  
Les enfants d'Israël en tous lieux répandus. '

Our poet has, very good-naturedly, (and we hope with the approbation of his holiness the Pope, to whom this work is dedicated,) set aside two stanzas for the secret conveyance of the souls of virtuous heathens and of little children, into the abodes of the blest.

The author of *Charlemagne* has constructed his hell upon an entirely new and fanciful theory. We see no sort of reason why Satan should not, in strict propriety, sit upon a throne; nor why his followers should be degraded from the rank of fallen angels into modern French revolutionists. We like Milton's account much

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better in all respects; and our author himself, as is the natural consequence of all affectation, flounders into contradiction in the very next verse, where he gives a most superb account of Lucifer. In the same spirit, he has made a more enlightened distribution of crimes and punishments; and established an entire new set of regulations and bye-laws in the regions of the damned. Alexander and the two Brutuses figure there with Cain and other murderers, while 'the noble Cæsar' is exempted. Now we have no notion of such a philosophical hell as our poetical casuist would carve out. This celebrated place is, we think, of all others the least liable to plans of reform. It is almost the oldest establishment upon record, and placed quite out of the reach of the progress of reason and metaphysics. We hate disputes in poetry, still more than in religion. At least, whatever appeals to the imagination, ought to rest on undivided sentiment, on one undisputed tradition, one catholic faith.<sup>1</sup> Besides, the whole account of the infernal regions is an excrescence, equally misplaced and improbable. None of the heroes of the poem descend there, but as Satan is brought thence to appear to Charlemagne in the shape of a lying priest, this opportunity is taken to describe the geography of the place according to the latest discoveries. There is one point in which we agree with the poet, *viz.* in his indignation against tyrants and their flatterers, though he does not go so far as honest Quevedo, who, when his hero wonders to see so few kings in hell, makes his guide reply sullenly, 'Here are all that ever reigned.'

We shall conclude our remarks on this part of the poem with the author's description of the punishment of Cain, which we think the most striking.

' Ici rugit Cain, les cheveux hérissés,  
Et portant sur son front la marque sanguinaire.  
" Cain, Cain, réponds : qu'as-tu fait de ton frère ? "  
A cette voix du Ciel tous ses sens sont glacés ;  
Cain croit voir Abel éclatant de lumière ;  
Et d'un bras téméraire,  
Il ose encor frapper l'objet de son courroux :  
Il voudrait le priver d'une seconde vie :  
Mais l'ombre glorieuse échappant à ses coups,  
Redouble dans son cœur les tourments de l'envie.'

<sup>1</sup> The personification of the Deity is another instance of critical contradiction and conceit. Objecting to the figures of Raphael and Michael Angelo as mythological and sensible, he introduces a little golden triangle behind a cloud (*triangulum in nube*) as a philosophical emblem of the Trinity !

# CHARLEMAGNE: OU L'ÉGLISE DÉLIVRÉE

## THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

*The Champion.*

December 25, 1814.

THE story of a poem is seldom worth a long description. It may be sufficient to say in the present case, that the danger to which the church was exposed, and from which it was afterwards delivered, arose from the second marriage of *Charlemagne* with *Armeline*, the daughter of *Didier*, the King of the Lombards, who was exerting himself to depose Pope Adrian. Charlemagne had divorced his first wife, *Adeline*, but he is warned in a vision to take her again to his bosom. He does so, and *Didier* and his daughter consequently become the enemies of this Christian Emperor, who takes arms to defend the Holy See. After the usual casualties and fluctuations of fortune, the son of Pepin finally triumphs.

On a more careful examination, we see no reason to alter our first opinion of this poem. It has given us no strong impulse, nor left any permanent trace on our minds. It opens no new and rich vein of poetry, though certainly great talents are shewn in the use which is made of existing materials. Perhaps it may be said that this is all that can be done in a modern poem: if so, that *all* is hardly worth the doing. There is no one who has borrowed his materials more than Milton, or who has made them more completely his own: there is hardly a line which does not breathe the same lofty spirit, hardly a thought or image which he has not clothed with the majesty of his genius. It is the same in reading other great poets. The informing mind is every where present to us. Who is there that does not know and feel sensibly the majestic copiousness of Homer, the polished elegance of Virgil, enamoured of its own workmanship,—the severe grandeur of Dante, the tender pathos of Tasso, the endless voluptuousness of Spenser, and the unnumbered graces of Ariosto? Even the mysterious solemnity of Ossian, and the wild romantic interest of Walter Scott, are something gained to the imagination. But in the present instance, we do not feel the same participation with the author's mind, nor accession of strength to our own. So little is it in the power even of the most accomplished art to counterfeit nature. The true Florimel did not differ more from the Florimel which was made for the witches' son, than true genius from the most successful and elaborate imitation of it.

We shall close these remarks with extracting two passages which in the opinion of our readers will perhaps be thought to amount to a complete refutation of our objections. The first is the description of the funeral rites of Orlando, in the thirteenth canto.

## CHARLEMAGNE: OU L'ÉGLISE DÉLIVRÉE

' Gaiffre a suivi son guide au fond du précipice,  
Un clocher solitaire a frappé ses regards :  
Dans les jours du repos, les fidèles épars  
Accourent au signal du divin sacrifice.  
Ici du haut des monts descendent les pasteurs.

La vierge des douleurs  
De ces mortels obscurs y reçoit la prière :  
Sur un autel de bois on a sculpté ses traits ;  
Les nombreux ex-voto de la divine mère  
Dans ces lieux écartés attestant les bienfaits.

Un son plaintif et sourd vient de frapper les airs ;  
C'est l'airain qui gémit pour les pompes funèbres.  
Dans le temple le jour a fait place aux ténèbres ;  
Des signes de la mort les parois sont couverts.  
Un saint pontife offrait la victime ineffable ;

Et sa voix secourable  
Invoquait pour nos preux le céleste repos.  
Un simple sarcophage au milieu de l'enceinte  
Retrace à tous les yeux la tombe du héros,  
Et répand dans les cœurs une tristesse sainte.

Le prêtre des hameaux, suivant l'antique usage,  
Dans l'Eglise chrétienne en tout temps révére,  
Trois fois avec l'eau sainte et l'encensoir sacré  
Fait solennellement le tour du sarcophage.

" Dans le sein de ton Dieu sois heureux à jamais :

Roland, repose en paix."

Du pontife telle est la fervente prière.  
Ces mots ont terminé le sacrifice saint ;  
Et la foule se rend dans le champ funéraire  
Ou gît, sous une croix, le corps du paladin.'

In the nineteenth canto, Lawrence and her children, after their escape from Bourdeaux, arrive at the castle of Melaric, an old christian knight, when the following example of perfect description occurs :—

' La nuit enveloppait les champs & les remparts ;  
Sur les murs menaçants de la salle gothique  
Une teinte plus sombre & plus mélancolique  
Couvrait les boucliers, les glaives, & les dards ;  
Le vent du soir soufflait des gorges du Pyrène ;  
Et sa fougueuse haleine  
Des armures des preux entrechoquait l'airain.  
Les lances, les cimiers rendent des sons funèbres :  
Leur murmure plaintif ressemble au cri lointain  
D'un guerrier qui succombe au milieu des ténèbres.'

The author in his notes gives us to understand that he is about another epic poem, the hero of which is Isolier, a native of Corsica, and which is to bear the same relation to Charlemagne, that the Odyssey does to the Iliad.

## MR. COLERIDGE'S CHRISTABEL

### MR. COLERIDGE'S CHRISTABEL <sup>1</sup>

*The Examiner.*

June 2, 1816.

THE fault of Mr. Coleridge is, that he comes to no conclusion. He is a man of that universality of genius, that his mind hangs suspended between poetry and prose, truth and falsehood, and an infinity of other things, and from an excess of capacity, he does little or nothing. Here are two unfinished poems, and a fragment. *Christabel*, which has been much read and admired in manuscript, is now for the first time confided to the public. *The Vision of Kubla Khan* still remains a profound secret; for only a few lines of it ever were written.

The poem of *Christabel* sets out in the following manner :

' 'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awaken'd the crowing cock;  
Tu—whit ! Tu—whoo !  
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew.  
Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,  
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch;  
From her kennel beneath the rock  
She makes answer to the clock,  
Four for the quarters and twelve for the hour;  
Ever and aye, moonshine or shower,  
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;  
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.'

We wonder that Mr. Murray, who has an eye for things, should suffer this 'mastiff bitch' to come into his shop. Is she a sort of Cerberus to fright away the critics ? But—gentlemen, she is toothless.

There is a dishonesty as well as affectation in all this. The secret of this pretended contempt for the opinion of the public, is that it is a sorry subterfuge for our self-love. The poet, uncertain of the approbation of his readers, thinks he shews his superiority to it by shocking their feelings at the outset, as a clown, who is at a loss how to behave himself, begins by affronting the company. This is what is called *throwing a crust to the critics*. If the beauties of *Christabel* should not be sufficiently admired, Mr. Coleridge may lay it all to two lines which he had too much manliness to omit in complaisance to the bad taste of his contemporaries.

We the rather wonder at this bold proceeding in the author, as his courage has cooled in the course of the publication, and he has omitted, from mere delicacy, a line which is absolutely necessary to the understanding the whole story. *The Lady Christabel*, wandering

<sup>1</sup> Christabel; Kubla Khan, a Vision; The Pains of Sleep. By S. T. Coleridge, Esq. 1816. Murray.

## MR. COLERIDGE'S CHRISTABEL

in the forest by moonlight, meets a lady in apparently great distress, to whom she offers her assistance and protection, and takes her home with her to her own chamber. This woman,

———' beautiful to see,  
Like a lady of a far countree,'

is a witch. Who she is else, what her business is with *Christabel*, upon what motives, to what end her sorceries are to work, does not appear at present; but this much we know, that she is a witch, and that *Christabel's* dread of her arises from her discovering this circumstance, which is told in a single line, which line, from an exquisite refinement in efficiency, is here omitted. When the unknown lady gets to *Christabel's* chamber, and is going to undress, it is said—

' Then drawing in her breath aloud  
Like one that shuddered, she unbound  
The cincture from beneath her breast :  
Her silken robe and inner vest  
Dropt to her feet, and full in view  
*Behold ! her bosom and half her side—*  
A sight to dream of, not to tell !  
And she is to sleep by *Christabel* ! '

The manuscript runs thus, or nearly thus :—

' Behold her bosom and half her side—  
*Hideous, deformed, and pale of hue.*'

This line is necessary to make common sense of the first and second part. 'It is the keystone that makes up the arch.' For that reason Mr. Coleridge left it out. Now this is a greater psychological curiosity than even the fragment of *Kubla Khan*.

In parts of *Christabel* there is a great deal of beauty, both of thought, imagery, and versification; but the effect of the general story is dim, obscure, and visionary. It is more like a dream than a reality. The mind, in reading it, is spell-bound. The sorceress seems to act without power—*Christabel* to yield without resistance. The faculties are thrown into a state of metaphysical suspense and theoretical imbecility. The poet, like the witch in *Spenser*, is evidently

' Busied about some wicked gin.'—

But we do not foresee what he will make of it. There is something disgusting at the bottom of his subject, which is but ill glossed over by a veil of Della Cruscan sentiment and fine writing—like moon-beams playing on a charnel-house, or flowers strewed on a dead body. Mr. Coleridge's style is essentially superficial, pretty, ornamental, and he has forced it into the service of a story which is petrific. In the



## MR. COLERIDGE'S CHRISTABEL

midst of moon-light, and fluttering ringlets, and flitting clouds, and enchanted echoes, and airy abstractions of all sorts, there is one genuine outburst of humanity, worthy of the author, when no dream oppresses him, no spell binds him. We give the passage entire :—

‘ But when he heard the lady’s tale,  
And when she told her father’s name,  
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,  
Murmuring o’er the name again,  
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;  
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;  
And constancy lives in realms above ;  
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;  
And to be wroth with one we love  
Doth work like madness in the brain.  
And thus it chanced, as I divine,  
With Roland and Sir Leoline.  
Each spake words of high disdain  
And insult to his heart’s best brother :  
They parted—ne’er to meet again !  
But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining—  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;  
A dreary sea now flows between.  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment’s space,  
Stood gazing in the damsel’s face :  
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine  
Came back upon his heart again.’

Why does not Mr. Coleridge always write in this manner, that we might always read him ? The description of the Dream of Bracy the bard is also very beautiful and full of power.

The conclusion of the second part of *Christabel*, about ‘ the little limber elf,’ is to us absolutely incomprehensible. *Kubla Khan*, we think, only shews that Mr. Coleridge can write better *nonsense* verses than any man in England. It is not a poem, but a musical composition.

‘ A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw :  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she play’d,  
Singing of Mount Abora.’

We could repeat these lines to ourselves not the less often for not knowing the meaning of them.

# CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE <sup>1</sup>

'I do perceive a fury in your words, but nothing wherefore.'

*The Yellow Dwarf.*

May 2, 1818

THE fourth and last canto of *Childe Harold* has disappointed us. It is a falling off from the three former ones. We have read it carefully through, but it has left only the same impression on our minds that a troubled dream does,—as disturbed, as confused, as disjointed, as harassing, and as unprofitable. It is an indigestion of the mind. It is the lassitude or feverish tossing and tumbling of the imagination, after having taken a surfeit of pleasure, and fed upon the fumes of pride. Childe Harold is a spoiled child of the Muses—and of Fortune. He looks down upon human life, not more with the superiority of intellect than with the arrogance of birth. The poet translates the lord into high sounding and supercilious verse. It is Agamemnon and Thersites in one person. The common events and calamities of the world afford matter for the effusions of his spleen, while they seem resented as affronts to his personal dignity.

'And as the soldiers' bore dead bodies by,  
He called them untaught knaves, unmannerly,  
To bring a slovenly, unhandsome corse  
Betwixt the wind and his nobility.'

So when 'the very age and body of the time' comes between his Lordship's speculative notions and hereditary prejudices, he stops the nose at it, and plays some very fantastic tricks before the public, who are lookers-on. In general, the idle wants, the naughty airs, the ill humours and *ennui*, the contempt for others, and disgust at themselves, common to exalted birth and station, are suffered to corrupt and stagnate in the blood that inherits them;—they are a disease in the flesh, an obstinate tumour in the mind, a cloud upon the brow, a venom that vents itself in hateful looks and peevish words to those about them; but in this poem and this author they have acquired 'an understanding and a tongue,'—are sublimed by imagination, systematised by sophistry—mount the steps of the Capitol, fulmine over Greece, and are poured in torrents of abuse on the world. It is well if the world like it—we are tired of the monotony of his Lordship's griefs, of which we can perceive neither beginning nor end. 'They are begot of nothing, born of nothing.' He volunteers his own Pilgrimage,—appoints his own penance,—makes his own confession,—and all—for nothing. He is in despair, because he has

<sup>1</sup> Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Canto the Fourth. By Lord Byron.' Murray.

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

nothing to complain of—miserable, because he is in want of nothing. ‘He has tasted of all earth’s bliss, both living and loving,’ and therefore he describes himself as suffering the tortures of the damned. He is in love with misery, because he has possessed every enjoyment; and because he has had his will in every thing, is inconsolable because he cannot have impossibilities. His Lordship, in fact, makes out his own hard case to be, that he has attained all those objects that the rest of the world admire; that he has met with none of those disasters which embitter their lives; and he calls upon us to sympathise with his griefs and his despair.

This will never do. It is more intolerable than even Mr. Wordsworth’s arbitrary egotism and pampered self-sufficiency. *He* creates a factitious interest out of nothing: Lord Byron would destroy our interest in all that is. Mr. Wordsworth, to salve his own self-love, makes the merest toy of his own mind,—the most insignificant object he can meet with,—of as much importance as the universe: Lord Byron would persuade us that the universe itself is not worth his or our notice; and yet he would expect us to be occupied with him.

—‘The man whose eye  
Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
The least of Nature’s works, one who might move  
The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds  
Unlawful ever.’

These lines, written by one of these two poets, might be addressed to both of them with equal propriety.

Lord Byron, in this the fourth and last Canto of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, seems to have worn out the glowing fervour of his genius to a *calx*, and to have exhausted the intense enthusiasm of his favourite topics of invective. There is little about himself, historically speaking—there is no plot, no story, no interest excited, no catastrophe. The general reflections are connected together merely by the accidental occurrence of different objects—the Venus of Medici, or the statue of Pompey,—the Capitol at Rome, or the Bridge of Sighs at Venice,—Shakespear, and Mrs. Radcliffe,—Bonaparte, and his Lordship in person,—are brought together as in a phantasmagoria, and with as little attention to keeping or perspective, as in Hogarth’s famous print for reversing the laws of vision. The judgments pronounced are often more dogmatical than profound, and with all their extravagance of expression, common-place. His Lordship does not understand the Apollo Belvidere or the Venus de Medicis, any more than Bonaparte. He cants about the one and against the other, and in doing the last, cuts his own throat. We are not without hopes that his friend Mr. Hobhouse will set this matter right in his

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

'Historical Illustrations'; and shew that, however it may suit his Noble Friend's poetical cross-purposes, politically and practically speaking, a house divided against itself cannot stand. He first, in his disdain of modern times, finds nothing to compare with the grandeur of antiquity but Bonaparte; and then 'as 'twere in spite of scorn,' goes on to disdain this idol, which he had himself gratuitously set up, in a strain of effeminate and rancorous abuse worthy of Mr. Wordsworth's pastoral, place-hunting Muse. Suppose what is here said of 'the child and champion of Jacobinism' to be true, are there not venal tongues and venal pens enough to echo it, without his Lordship's joining in the cry? Will 'the High Legitimates, the Holy Band' be displeased with these captious efforts to level the object of their hate to the groveling standard of royalty? Is there not a division of labour even on Mount Parnassus? The other writers of prose and verse, who enter the Temple of Fame by Mr. Murray's door in Albemarle-street, have their cues. Mr. Southey, for instance, never sings or says, or dreams of singing or saying, that the Prince Regent is not so great a man as Julius Cæsar. Why then should Lord Byron force the comparison between the modern and the ancient hero? It is because the slaves of power mind the cause they have to serve, because their own interest is concerned; but the friends of liberty always sacrifice their cause, which is *only* the cause of humanity, to their own spleen, vanity, and self-opinion. The league between tyrants and slaves is a chain of adamant; the bond between poets and the people is a rope of sand. Is this a truth, or is it not? If it is not, let Lord Byron write no more on this subject, which is beyond his height and his depth. Let him not trample on the mighty or the fallen! Bonaparte is not Beppo.

The versification and style of this poem are as perverse and capricious as the method or the sentiments. One stanza perpetually runs on into the next, making the exception the rule, merely because it properly ends in itself; and there is a strange mixture of stately phraseology and far-fetched metaphor, with the most affected and bald simplicity of expression and uncouthness in the rhymes. It is well his Lordship is born so high, or all Grub-street would set him down as a plebeian for such lines as the following:—

' I lov'd her <sup>1</sup> from my boyhood—she to me  
Was as a fairy city of the heart,  
Rising like water-columns from the sea,  
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;  
And Otway, Ratscliff, <sup>2</sup> Schiller, Shakspeare's art,

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<sup>1</sup> Venice.

<sup>2</sup> It should be Radcliffe. •

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,  
Although I found her thus, we did not part,  
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,  
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

I can repeople with the past—and of  
The present there is still for eye and thought,  
And meditation chasten'd down, *enough*;  
And more, it may be, than I hop'd or sought.'

What will the Critics of the Cockney School of Poetry say to this?—Lie on, and swear that it is high patrician poetry, and of very noble birth.

The introductory stanzas are on the same subject, Venice; and are better.

' I stood in Venice, on the bridge of sighs;  
A palace and a prison on each hand :  
I saw from out the wave her structures rise  
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :  
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles  
O'er the far times, when many a subject land  
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,  
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles !

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,  
Rising with her tiara of proud towers  
At airy distance, with majestic motion,  
A ruler of the waters, and their powers :  
And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers  
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East  
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.  
In purple was she robed, and of her feast  
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increas'd.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,  
And silent rows the songless gondolier;  
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
And music meets not always now the ear;  
Those days are gone—but beauty still is here.  
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,  
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,  
The pleasant place of all festivity,  
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy.'

The thought expressed in the last stanza, 'but nature doth not die,' is particularly fine, and consolatory to the mind. We prefer the stanza relating to the tomb of Petrarch, to any others in the poem :—

' There is a tomb in Arqua;—rear'd in air,  
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose  
The bones of Laura's lover : here repair  
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

The pilgrims of his genius. He arose  
To raise a language, and his land reclaim  
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes;  
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name  
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died;  
The mountain-village where his latter days  
Went down the vale of years; and 'tis their pride—  
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,  
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze  
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain  
And venerably simple, such as raise  
A feeling more accordant with his strain  
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt  
Is one of that complexion which seems made  
For those who their mortality have felt,  
And sought a refuge for their hopes decay'd  
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,  
Which shows a distant prospect far away  
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,  
For they can lure no further; and the ray  
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday.

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,  
And shining in the brawling brook, whereby,  
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours  
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye  
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.  
If from society we learn to live,  
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die:  
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give  
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive.'

The apostrophe to Tasso and to his patron is written with great force, but in a different spirit:—

' Ferrara ! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,  
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,  
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats  
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood  
Of Este, which for many an age made good  
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore  
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood  
Of petty power impelled, of those who wore  
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.  
Hark to his strain ! and they survey his cell !  
And see how dearly earn'd Toquato's fame,  
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell :

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

The miserable despot could not quell  
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend  
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell  
Where he had plung'd it. Glory without end  
Scatter'd the clouds away; and on that name attend

The tears and praises of all time; while thine  
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink  
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line  
Is shaken into nothing; but the link  
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think  
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—  
Alfonso ! how thy ducal pageants shrink  
From thee ! if in another station born,  
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn :

*Thou !* form'd to eat, and be despis'd, and die,  
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou  
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:  
*He !* with a glory round his furrow'd brow,  
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,  
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire.'

In the same strain, and with an alternat mixture of enthusiasm and spleen, the author pays the tribute of acknowledgement to the artist of 'the statue that enchants the world,' to the shades of Michael Angelo, Alfieri, 'the starry Galileo,' Machiavel, and to the Bard of Prose, 'him of the Hundred Tales of Love'—Boccaccio.

From these recollections the poet proceeds to describe the fall of the Velino, 'a hell of waters.' We cannot say but that we think his powers better suited to express the human passions than to reflect the forms of nature. In the present instance, however, the poet has not invoked the genius of the place in vain : it represents, in some measure, the workings of his own spirit,—disturbed, restless, labouring, foaming, sparkling, and now hid in labyrinths and plunging into the gloom of night. The following description is obscure, tortuous, perplexed, and abortive; yet who can say that it is not beautiful, striking, and impassioned?—

'How profound  
The gulf ! and how the giant element  
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent,  
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent !

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows  
More like the fountain of an infant sea  
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes  
Of a new world, than only thus to be

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,  
With many windings through the vale :—Look back !  
Lo ! where it comes like an eternity  
As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

Horribly beautiful ! but on the verge,  
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,  
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,  
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn  
Its steady dyes, while all around is torn  
By the distracted waters, bears serene  
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn :  
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,  
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.'

We'll look no more : such kind of writing is enough to turn the brain of the reader or the author. The repetitions in the last stanza are like interlineations in an imperfect manuscript, left for after-selection ; such as, 'Hope upon a death-bed'—'Love watching madness,'—'Unworn its steady dyes'—'Serene its brilliant hues,'—'the distracted waters'—'the torture of the scene,' &c. There is here in every line an effort at brilliancy, and a successful effort ; and yet, in the next, as if nothing had been done, the same thing is attempted to be expressed again with the same labour as before, the same success, and with as little appearance of repose or satisfaction of mind.

It is in vain to attempt a regular account of the remainder of this poem, which is a mass of discordant things, incoherent, not gross, seen 'now in glimmer and now in gloom,' and 'moving wild laughter in the throat of death.' The poem is like the place it describes :—

'The double night of ages, and of her,  
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap <sup>1</sup>  
All round us : we but feel our way to err :  
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,  
And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap ;  
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer  
Stumbling o'er recollections ; now we clap  
Our hands, and cry "Eureka !" it is clear—  
When but some false mirage <sup>2</sup> of ruin rises near.'

This is undoubtedly fine : but Rome was glorious, before she became a ruin ; stately, before she was laid low ; was 'seen of all eyes,' before she was confounded in oblivion. Lord Byron's poetry, in its irregular and gloomy magnificence, we fear, antedates its own doom ; and is buried in a desolation of his own creating, where the mists of

<sup>1</sup> There is a false concord here.

<sup>2</sup> This word is not English, nor is its meaning clear. .



## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

fancy cloud, instead of lighting up the face of nature; and the fierceness of the passions, like the Sirocco of the Desert, withers and consumes the heart. We give this judgment against our wills; and shall be happy, should we live to see it reversed by another generation. All our prejudices are in favour of the Noble Poet, and against his maligners. *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* is dedicated to Mr. Hobhouse, and there are passages both in the dedication and the poem which would bribe our opinions, were they to be bribed either by our admiration of genius or our love of liberty. Such are the following passages :—

‘ What from this barren being do we reap?  
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,  
Life short, and truth a gem that loves the deep,  
And all things weighed in custom's falsest scale;  
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil  
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right  
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale  
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,  
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,  
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,  
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,  
Bequeathing their hereditary rage  
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage  
War for their chains, and rather than be free,  
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage  
Within the same arena where they see  
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

I speak not of men's creeds,—they rest between  
Man and his Maker—but of things allowed,  
Averr'd, and known,—and daily, hourly seen—  
The yoke that is upon us doubly bowed,  
And the intent of tyranny avowed,  
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown  
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,  
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne :  
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.’

But we must conclude; not, however, till we have made two extracts more. We shall not give the passages relating to his separation from his wife, or the death of the Princess Charlotte: we see nothing remarkable in the events, or in his Lordship's reflections on them. As to his vow of revenge, which is to end in forgiveness, it is unconscious, constitutional caprice and contradiction: it is self-will exerting itself in straining at a violent conclusion; and then, by another exertion, defeating itself by doing nothing. So also he expatiates on the boundless anticipated glories of a female reign, which were never likely, and are now impossible, only that he may

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

rail at lady Fortune in good set terms, and indulge a deeper disgust at all that is real or possible. We will give what is better than such cant,—the description of the dying Gladiator, and the conclusion of the poem :—

‘ I see before me the Gladiator lie :  
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow  
Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
And his drooped head sinks gradually low—  
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now  
The arena swims around him—he is gone,  
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail’d the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
Were with his heart, and that was far away ;  
He reck’d not of the life he lost nor prize,  
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay  
*There* were his young barbarians all at play,  
*There* was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
Butcher’d to make a Roman holiday—  
All this rush’d with his blood—Shall he expire  
And unavenged ?—Arise ! ye Goths, and glut your ire ! ’

*O si sic Omnia !* All, however, is not so. The stanzas immediately following, on the story of the Grecian Daughter and the Apollo Belvidere, are in as false and sophisticated a taste, as these are pure and sublime. But, at the close of the poem, in addressing the pathless ocean,—the self-willed, untamed mighty world of waters,—his genius resumes its beauty and its power, and the Pilgrim sinks to rest in strains as mild and placid as the breath of childhood, that frets itself asleep.

‘ My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme  
Has died into an echo ; it is fit  
The spell should break of this protracted dream.  
The torch shall be extinguish’d which hath lit  
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ—  
Would it were worthier ! but I am not now  
That which I have been—and my visions flit  
Less palpably before me—and the glow  
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

Farewell ! a word that must be, and hath been—  
A sound which makes us linger ;—yet—farewell !  
Ye ! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene  
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell  
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell  
A single recollection, not in vain  
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell ;  
Farewell ! with him alone may rest the pain,  
If such there were—with you, the moral of his strain ! ’

## LORD BYRON'S TRAGEDY

### LORD BYRON'S TRAGEDY OF MARINO FALIERO<sup>1</sup>

*The London Magazine.*

May, 1821.

WE cannot speak in terms of very enthusiastic praise of this historical play. Indeed, it hardly corresponds to its title. It has little of a local or circumstantial air about it. We are not violently transported to the time or scene of action. We know not much about the plot, about the characters, about the motives of the persons introduced, but we know a good deal about their sentiments and opinions on matters in general, and hear some very fine descriptions from their mouths ; which would, however, have become the mouth of any other individual in the play equally well, and the mouth of the noble poet better than that of any of his characters. We have, indeed, a previous theory, that Lord Byron's genius is not dramatic, and the present performance is not one that makes it absolutely necessary for us to give up that theory. It is very inferior to *Manfred*, both in beauty and interest. The characters and situations there were of a romantic and poetical cast, mere creatures of the imagination ; and the sentiments such as the author might easily conjure up by fancying himself on enchanted ground, and adorn with all the illusions that hover round the poet's pen, 'prouder than when blue Iris bends.' The more the writer indulged himself in following out the phantoms of a morbid sensibility, or lapt himself in the voluptuous dream of his own existence, the nearer he would approach to the truth of nature, the more he would be identified with the airy and preter-natural personages he represented. But here he descends to the ground of fact and history ; and we cannot say that in that circle he treads with the same firmness of step that he has displayed boldness and smoothness of wing in soaring above it. He paints the cloud, or the rainbow in the cloud ; or dives into the secret and subterraneous workings of his own breast ; but he does not, with equal facility or earnestness, wind into the march of human affairs upon the earth, or mingle in the throng and daily conflict of human passions. There is neither action nor reaction in his poetry ; both which are of the very essence of the Drama. He does not commit himself in the common arena of man ; but looks down, from the high tower of his rank, nay, of his genius, on the ignobler interests of humanity, and describes them either as a dim and distant phantasmagoria or a paltry fantoccini exhibition, scarce worth his scorn. He fixes on some point of imagination or of brooding thought as a resting-place for his own pride and

<sup>1</sup> Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice. An Historical Tragedy, in Five Acts. With the Prophecy of Dante. A Poem, by Lord Byron. Murray, London.

## OF MARINO FALIERO

irritability, instead of seeking to borrow a new and unnecessary stimulus from the busy exploits and over-wrought feelings of others. His Lordship's genius is a spirit of necromancy or of misanthropy, not of humanity. He is governed by antipathies more than by sympathies ; but the genius of dramatic poetry is like charity which ' endureth much, is patient, and by humbling itself, is exalted.' Lord Byron, for instance, sympathizes readily with Dante, who was a poet, a patriot, a noble Florentine, and exile from his country : he can describe the feelings of Dante, for in so doing, he does little more than describe his own : he makes nothing out of Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice, and cares nothing about him, for he himself is neither a warrior, a statesman, nor a conspirator. Lord Byron can gaze with swimming eyes upon any of the great lights of Italy, and view them through the misty, widespread glory of lengthening centuries : that is, he can take a high and romantic interest in them, as they appear to us and to him ; but he cannot take an historical event in her annals, transport us to the time and place of action, give us a real, living interest in the scene, and by filling the mind with the agonizing hopes, and panic-fears, and incorrigible will, and sudden projects of the authentic actors in the world's volume, charm us out of ourselves, and make us forget that there are such half-faced fellows as readers, authors, or critics in existence. Lord Byron's page has not this effect ; it is modern, smooth, fresh from Mr. Murray's, and does not smack of the olden time. It is not rough, Gothic, pregnant with past events, unacquainted with the present time, glowing with the spirit of that dark and fiery age : but strewn with the flowers of poetry and the tropes of rhetoric. The author does not try to make us *overhear* what old Faliero, and his young wife, and his wily, infuriated accomplices would say, but makes them his proxies to discuss the topics of love and marriage, the claims of rank and common justice, or to describe a scene by moonlight, with a running allusion to the pending controversy between his Lordship, Mr. Bowles, and Mr. Campbell, on the merits of the natural and artificial style in poetry. ' That was not the way ' of our first tragic writers, nor is it (thank God) that of some of the last. ' One touch of nature makes the whole world kin : '—one line of Webster, Decker, or Ford (to say nothing of Shakspeare), is worth all the didactic and descriptive paraphrases of what would neither be seen nor felt by men in a state of strong agitation as they occur in this play. We cannot call to mind, after reading it, a single electric shock of passion ; not a spark of genius struck out of the immediate occasion, like fire out of the flint ; not one revelation of our inmost nature, forced from the rack of restless circumstance. But this is all that is truly dramatic in any tragedy or poem : the rest is but a form of words, an imposing display of ingenuity, or understanding, or fancy, which the

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writer (however excellent he may be in any of these respects) might as well or much better make in his own person. We think most highly of Lord Byron's powers 'on this side of idolatry'; but we do not think those powers are dramatic, nor can we regard the present work as a splendid exception to that general opinion. But enough of prefatory remark.

*Marino Faliero* is without a plot, without characters, without fluctuating interest, and without the spirit of dialogue. The events hang together very slenderly and unaccountably. Steno (one of the Senate) has slandered the Doge's wife, Angiolina, and is adjudged by his peers to a month's imprisonment only, which is considered by the haughty Faliero as equivalent to an acquittal and a deliberate insult to himself; and he resolves to revenge it by destroying the senate and overturning the state. His lady endeavours to pacify him under this indignity, says she is very indifferent to the matter herself, and a long, cool, dispassionate argument follows, in which she enters into her sentiments of virtue and honour, and gives her reasons at large for marrying the Doge (who is an old man but choleric withal), which amounts to this, that she did not care at all about him. The whole of her connection with the play is a very Platonic sort of business. She neither precipitates nor retards the plot, is neither irritated by the imputation on her own character, nor overwhelmed by her husband's fate. She is a very fair, unsullied piece of marble. Just at the moment that the Doge has received this mortal affront from the senate, Israel Bertuccio (an old fellow-soldier and retainer of his) has been struck by a Venetian nobleman, and comes to his patron 'with blood upon his face' to supplicate for revenge. This facilitates the object of the Doge. Israel Bertuccio is commander of the arsenal, and it so happens that a conspiracy is already hatching there, among the officers and workmen, to redress the wrongs of the state, and cut the throats of reverend rogues in office. These things fall out luckily together: there is no connection between them, but they serve as a peg to hang the plot on. The Doge is introduced to their council and becomes their leader; but, though he is represented as a fiery, untameable character, a rough soldier, he pules and whines through the rest of the piece, is continually reproaching his companions with his own scruples of conscience, making out that they have nothing to do with them, because they are only base plebeians, not knit to the senate by the ties of honour and friendship; but yet he persists in carrying into effect his purpose of revenge, and in assisting theirs of patriotism and justice. This is not very natural nor very interesting. The plot is defeated by the old trick of one of the conspirators being a little softer-hearted than the rest, and the Doge ends his inauspicious career by an elaborate denunciation of the senate, and

## OF MARINO FALIERO

prophetic view of the fall of Venice. Lord Byron has taken no advantage of Otway's *Venice Preserved* to heighten his plot, though the outline is much the same; nor is there any tendency to plagiarism from other authors, except an unaccountable pilfering of single phrases from Shakspeare. We will just give a few of these.

. . . *There's no such thing.*

We will find other means to *make all even.*

. . . . To pass from mouth to mouth  
Of *loose mechanics.*

. . . In the *olden time*  
Some sacrifices asked a single victim.

*There's blood upon thy face.*

I am a man, my lord.

Groan with the *strong conception* of their wrongs.

But let that pass,—*We will be jocund.*

The same sin that overthrew the angels.

. . . But I have set my little left  
Of life upon this cast.

It is our knell, or that of Venice.

We will not *scotch*, but kill.

And calmly wash those hands *incarnadine.*

Among the poetical passages in this play, we might instance the following as some of the most striking. The Doge, in addressing his nephew on the cause of their revenge, says passionately—

‘—Aye, think upon the cause—  
Forget it not :—When you lie down to rest,  
Let it be black among your dreams; and when  
The morn returns, so let it stand between  
The sun and you, as an ill-omen'd cloud  
Upon a summer-day of festival :  
So will it stand to me.’

Angiolina's description of her husband is also very graceful.

‘—Would he were return'd !  
He has been much disquieted of late ;  
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,  
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,  
Which seems to be more nourish'd by a soul  
So quick and restless that it would consume  
Less hardy clay,—Time has but little power  
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike  
To other spirits of his order, who,  
In the first burst of passion, pour away

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Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him  
An aspect of eternity : his thoughts,  
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all  
Have nothing of old age : and his bold brow  
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,  
Not in their decrepitude : and he of late  
Has been more agitated than his wont.  
Would he were come ! for I alone have power  
Upon his troubled spirit.'

We do not think the Noble Author has, in the sequel, embodied this *Titianesque* conception of his hero, Falerio. On the contrary, he is tetchy and wayward, sceptical, querulous, and full of the gusts and flaws of passion. As an instance of mere haste and irascibility, arising out of nothing and subsiding into nothing, take his captious assumption of an agony of rage at the mention of his son, or what he chuses to interpret as such.

' *Israel Bertuccio.* You must come alone.

*Doge.* With but my nephew.

*Israel Bertuccio.* Nor were he your son.

*Doge.* Wretch ! darest thou name my son ? He died in arms  
At Sapienza for this faithless state.

Oh ! that he were alive, and I in ashes !

Or that he were alive ere I be ashes !

I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

*Israel Bertuccio.* Not one of all those strangers whom thou doubttest,

But will regard thee with a filial feeling,

So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

*Doge* (answers). *The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting ?*

There is very little of keeping, or of ' the aspect of eternity,' in this.

Angiolina and Marianna, her friend, thus moralize very prettily on the distinction between virtue and reputation.

' *Marianna.* Yet full many a dame,  
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong  
Of such a slander ; and less rigid ladies,  
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud  
And all-inexorable in their cry  
For justice.

*Angiolina.* This but proves it is the name  
And not the quality they prize : the first  
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,  
If they require it to be blazon'd forth ;  
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming,  
As they would look out for an ornament  
Of which they feel the want, but not because  
They think it so ; *they live in others' thoughts,*  
*And would seem honest as they must seem fair.'*

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The Doge presently after addresses his wife to the following purpose

‘—Well I know  
’Twere hopeless for humanity to dream  
Of honesty in such infected blood,  
Although ’twere wed to him it covets most :  
An incarnation of the poet’s god  
In all his marble-chisell’d beauty, or  
The demi-deity, Alcides, in  
His majesty of superhuman manhood,  
Would not suffice to bind when virtue is not,’ &c.

To say nothing of the allusion to Shakspeare in the above passage, it is Lord Byron speaking in the nineteenth century, and not the Doge of Venice in the fourteenth. The author has *virtù* running in his head, more than virtue. There are several of these anachronisms of style and sentiment scattered throughout. We have neither space nor inclination to quote them. The following speech of the Doge, giving directions for the first raising the alarm of insurrection, is as spirited as anything in the play.

‘—By different routes  
Let your march be directed, every sixty  
Entering a separate avenue, and still  
Upon the way let your cry be of war  
*And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn* <sup>1</sup>  
*Discern’d before the port* ; form round the palace,  
Within whose court will be drawn out in arms  
My nephew and the clients of our house,  
Many and martial ; while the bell tolls on,  
Shout ye, “ Saint Mark !—the foe is on the waters ! ” ’

It is no wonder that Calendaro, after this, exclaims—

‘ I see it now—but on, my noble lord.’

This is what we mean by dramatic writing. In reading such lines as these, we not only read fine poetry, but we feel, see, and hear the genius of the place, the age, and people, stirring within us and about us. Dramatic poetry, as Shakspeare says of war, should be ‘ lively, audible, and full of vent.’

Among the passages calculated for action and stage effect, are the Doge’s tearing off and trampling on the ducal bonnet in the first act, his presentation to the conspirators in the third, and the entrance of the Signor of the Night to arrest him as a traitor just as he is expecting the signal for the destruction of the senate in the fourth. As he is waiting for the tolling of the bell, he hears other noises.

‘—Hark ! was there not  
A murmur as of distant voices, and  
The tramp of feet in martial unison ?

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<sup>1</sup> This is a fiction, a *ruse de guerre*.



## TRAGEDY OF MARINO FALIERO

Then

‘Enter a Signor of the Night, with Guards.  
Doge, I arrest thee of high treason,’ &c.

As a specimen of the political and practical tone of the tragedy, we shall select only one passage.

‘*Israel Bertuccio.* We have them in the toils—it cannot fail!

Now thou’rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make

A name immortal greater than the greatest :

Free citizens have struck at kings ere now ;

Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands

Have crush’d dictators, as the popular steel

Has reach’d patricians ; but until this hour,

What prince has plotted for his people’s freedom ?

Or risk’d a life to liberate his subjects ?

For ever, and for ever, they conspire

Against the people, to abuse their hands

To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons

Against the fellow nations, so that yoke

On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,

*Not glut*, the never-gorged Leviathan !

Now, my lord, to our enterprise ; ’tis great,

And greater the reward ; why stand you rapt ?

A moment back, and you were all impatience !

*Doge.* And is it then decided ? Must they die ?

*Israel Bertuccio.* Who ?

*Doge.* My own friends by blood and courtesy,

And many deeds and days—the senators ?

*Israel Bertuccio.* You passed their sentence, and it is a just one.

*Doge.* Ay, so it seems, and so it is to *you* ;

You are a patriot, a plebeian Gracchus—

The rebel’s oracle—the people’s tribune—

I blame you not, you act in your vocation ;

They smote you, and oppress’d you, and despised you ;

So they have *me* : but *you* ne’er spake with them ;

You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt ;

You never had their wine-cup at your lips ;

You grew not up with them, nor laugh’d, nor wept,

Nor held a revel in their company ;

Ne’er smiled to see them smile, nor claim’d their smile

In social interchange for yours, nor trusted

Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have :

These hairs of mine are grey, and so are theirs,

The elders of the council ; I remember

When all our locks were like the raven’s wing,

As we went forth to take our prey around

The isles, wrung from the false Mahometan ;

And can I see them dabbled o’er with blood ?

Each stab to them will seem my suicide.’

We agree with *Israel Bertuccio*, who interrupts him here—

‘*Doge ! Doge !* this vacillation is unworthy  
Of a child,’ &c.

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It is not the proper way of *backing his friends*. We had intended to give Lioni the Senator's description of a Venetian moonlight ; but it is too long, and the public are all but glutted with the abstract beauty and dazzling power of Lord Byron's pen. There are some strange inversions of style in different parts of the work, and two instances of bad English.

'And in my mind, there is no traitor like  
He whose domestic treason plants the poignard  
Within the breast which trusted to its truth.'

'Lady ! *the natural distraction of*  
Thy thoughts at such a moment *make* the question  
Merit forgiveness,' &c.

*The Doge of Venice*, which is to be brought out this evening (April 25th) at Drury Lane, will hardly make a popular acting play.<sup>1</sup> Any thing written by Lord Byron, must be read.

*The Prophecy of Dante*, appended to the tragedy, is a rhapsody in his Lordship's manner, but not in his best manner. The description of Italy, as it bursts upon the traveller from the brow of the Alps, is admirable ; but it is such as might come from the lips of a stranger, a native of the frozen North, like Lord Byron, rather than from the old poet Dante, who had bathed from his youth in her vales and azure skies, and was 'native and endued unto that sunny element.' The author speaks of continuing and completing this fragment, if he meets with encouragement to do so. But is it not for him to write what he pleases, and for the public to read in spite of themselves ?

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*The London Magazine.*

May 1821.

THE object of Mr. Crabbe's writings seems to be, to show what an unpoetical world we live in : or rather, perhaps, the very reverse of this conclusion might be drawn from them ; for it might be said, that if this is poetry, there is nothing but poetry in the world. Our author's style might be cited as an answer to Audrey's inquiry, 'Is poetry a true thing ?' If the most feigning poetry is the truest, Mr. Crabbe is of all poets the least poetical. There are here no ornaments, no flights of fancy, no illusions of sentiment, no tinsel of words. His song is one sad reality, one unraised, unvaried note of unavailing woe. Literal fidelity serves him in the place of invention ; he assumes importance by a number of petty details ; he rivets attention by being

<sup>1</sup> It was acted, but did not succeed.

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prolix. He not only deals in incessant matters of fact, but in matters of fact of the most familiar, the least animating, and most unpleasant kind ; but he relies for the effect of novelty on the microscopic minuteness with which he dissects the most trivial objects—and, for the interest he excites on the unshrinking determination with which he handles the most painful. His poetry has an official and professional air. He is called out to cases of difficult births, of fractured limbs, or breaches of the peace ; and makes out a parish register of accidents and offences. He takes the most trite, the most gross and obvious, and revolting part of nature, for the subject of his elaborate descriptions ; but it is nature still, and Nature is a great and mighty goddess. ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians.’ It is well for the reverend author that it is so. Individuality is, in his theory, the only definition of poetry. Whatever is, he hitches into rhyme. Whoever makes an exact image of any thing on the earth below, however deformed or insignificant, according to him, must succeed—and he has succeeded. Mr. Crabbe is one of the most popular and admired of our living writers. That he is so, can be accounted for on no other principle than the strong ties that bind us to the world about us and our involuntary yearnings after whatever in any manner powerfully and directly reminds us of it. His Muse is not one of the daughters of Memory, but the old toothless mumbling dame herself, doling out the gossip and scandal of the neighbourhood, recounting, *totidem verbis et literis*, what happens in every place in the kingdom every hour in the year, and fastening always on the worst as the most palatable morsels. But she is a circumstantial old lady, communicative, scrupulous, leaving nothing to the imagination, harping on the smallest grievances, a village oracle and critic, most veritable, most identical, bringing us acquainted with persons and things just as they happened, and giving us a local interest in all she knows and tells. The springs of Helicon are, in general, supposed to be a living stream, bubbling and sparkling, and making sweet music as it flows ; but Mr. Crabbe’s fountain of the Muses is a stagnant pool, dull, motionless, choked up with weeds and corruption ; it reflects no light from heaven, it emits no cheerful sound :—his Pegasus has not floating wings, but feet, cloven feet that scorn the low ground they tread upon ;—no flowers of love, of hope, or joy spring here, or they bloom only to wither in a moment ; our poet’s verse does not put a spirit of youth in every thing, but a spirit of fear, despondency and decay ; it is not an electric spark to kindle and expand, but acts like the torpedo-touch to deaden and contract : it lends no rainbow tints to fancy, it aids no soothing feelings in the heart ; it gladdens no prospect, it stirs no wish ; in its view the current of life runs slow, dull, cold, dispirited, half-underground, muddy, and

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clogged with all creeping things. The world is one vast infirmary; the hill of Parnassus is a penitentiary; to read him is a penance; yet we read on! Mr. Crabbe is a *fascinating* writer. He contrives to 'turn diseases to commodities,' and makes a virtue of necessity. He puts us out of conceit with this world, which perhaps a severe divine should do; yet does not, as a charitable divine ought, point to another. His morbid feelings droop and cling to the earth; grovel, where they should soar; and throw a dead weight on every aspiration of the soul after the good or beautiful. By degrees, we submit and are reconciled to our fate, like patients to a physician, or prisoners in the condemned cell. We can only explain this by saying, as we said before, that Mr. Crabbe gives us one part of nature, the mean, the little, the disgusting, the distressing; that he does this thoroughly, with the hand of a master; and we forgive all the rest!—

Mr. Crabbe's first poems were published so long ago as the year 1782, and received the approbation of Dr. Johnson only a little before he died. This was a testimony from an enemy; for Dr. Johnson was not an admirer of the simple in style or minute in description. Still he was an acute, strong-minded man, and could see truth when it was presented to him, even through the mist of his prejudices and his theories. There was something in Mr. Crabbe's intricate points that did not, after all, so ill accord with the Doctor's purblind vision; and he knew quite enough of the petty ills of life to judge of the merit of our poet's descriptions, though he himself chose to slur them over in high-sounding dogmas or general invectives. Mr. Crabbe's earliest poem of the *Village* was recommended to the notice of Dr. Johnson by Sir Joshua Reynolds; and we cannot help thinking that a taste for that sort of poetry, which leans for support on the truth and fidelity of its imitations of nature, began to display itself much about that time, and, in a good measure, in consequence of the direction of the public taste to the subject of painting. Book-learning, the accumulation of wordy common-places, the gaudy pretensions of poetical diction, had enfeebled and perverted our eye for nature: the study of the fine arts, which came into fashion about forty years ago, and was then first considered as a polite accomplishment, would tend imperceptibly to restore it. Painting is essentially an imitative art; it cannot subsist for a moment on empty generalities: the critic, therefore, who had been used to this sort of substantial entertainment, would be disposed to read poetry with the eye of a connoisseur, would be little captivated with smooth, polished, unmeaning periods, and would turn with double eagerness and relish to the force and precision of individual details, transferred, as it were, to the page from the canvas. Thus an admirer of Teniers or Hobbima might think little of the

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pastoral sketches of Pope or Goldsmith; even Thomson describes not so much the naked object as what he sees in his mind's eye, surrounded and glowing with the mild, bland, genial vapours of his brain:—but the adept in Dutch interiors, hovels, and pig-styes must find in such a writer as Crabbe a man after his own heart. He is the very thing itself; he paints in words, instead of colours: that's all the difference. As Mr. Crabbe is not a painter, only because he does not use a brush and colours, so he is for the most part a poet, only because he writes in lines of ten syllables. All the rest might be found in a newspaper, an old magazine, or a county-register. Our author is himself a little jealous of the prudish fidelity of his homely Muse, and tries to justify himself by precedents. He brings as a parallel instance of merely literal description, Pope's lines on the gay Duke of Buckingham, beginning 'In the worst inn's worst room see Villiers lies!' But surely nothing can be more dissimilar. Pope describes what is striking, Crabbe would have described merely what was there. The objects in Pope stand out to the fancy from the mixture of the mean with the gaudy, from the contrast of the scene and the character. There is an appeal to the imagination; you see what is passing in a poetical point of view. In Crabbe there is no foil, no contrast, no impulse given to the mind. It is all on a level and of a piece. In fact, there is so little connection between the subject-matter of Mr. Crabbe's lines, and the ornament of rhyme which is tacked to them, that many of his verses read like serious burlesque, and the parodies which have been made upon them are hardly so quaint as the originals.

Mr. Crabbe's great fault is certainly that he is a sickly, a querulous, a fastidious poet. He sings the country; and he sings it in a pitiful tone. He chooses this subject only to take the charm out of it; and to dispel the illusion, the glory, and the dream, which had hovered over it in golden verse from Theocritus to Cowper. He sets out with professing to overturn the theory which had hallowed a shepherd's life, and made the names of grove and valley music to our ears, in order to give us truth in its stead; but why not lay aside the fool's cap and bells at once, why not insist on the unwelcome reality in plain prose? If our author is a poet, why trouble himself with statistics? If he is a statistic writer, why set his ill news to harsh and grating verse? The philosopher in painting the dark side of human nature may have reason on his side, and a moral lesson or a remedy in view. The tragic poet, who shows the sad vicissitudes of things, and the disappointments of the passions, at least strengthens our yearnings after imaginary good, and lends wings to our desires, by which we, 'at one bound, high overleap all

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bound' of actual suffering. But Mr. Crabbe does neither. He gives us discoloured paintings of life; helpless, repining, unprofitable, unedifying distress. He is not a philosopher, but a sophist, a misanthrope in verse; a *namby-pamby* Mandeville, a Malthus turned metrical romancer. He professes historical fidelity; but his vein is not dramatic; nor does he give us the *pros* and *cons* of that versatile gipsy, Nature. He does not indulge his fancy or sympathise with us, or tell us how the poor feel; but how he should feel in their situation, which we do not want to know. He does not weave the web of their lives of a mingled yarn, good and ill together, but clothes them all in the same dingy linsey-woolsey, or tinges them with a green and yellow melancholy. He blocks out all possibility of good, cancels the hope, or even the wish for it as a weakness; checkmates Tityrus and Virgil at the game of pastoral cross-purposes, disables all his adversary's white pieces, and leaves none but black ones on the board. The situation of a country clergyman is not necessarily favourable to the cultivation of the Muse. He is set down, perhaps, as he thinks, in a small curacy for life, and he takes his revenge by imprisoning the reader's imagination in luckless verse. Shut out from social converse, from learned colleges and halls, where he passed his youth, he has no cordial fellow-feeling with the unlettered manners of the *Village* or the *Borough*, and he describes his neighbours as more uncomfortable and discontented than himself. All this while he dedicates successive volumes to rising generations of noble patrons; and while he desolates a line of coast with sterile, blighting lines, the only leaf of his books where honour, beauty, worth, or pleasure bloom, is that inscribed to the Rutland family!

But enough of this; and to our task of quotation. The poem of *The Village* sets off nearly as follows:

' No; cast by Fortune on a frowning coast,  
Which neither groves nor happy valleys boast;  
Where other cares than those the Muse relates,  
And other shepherds dwell with other mates;  
By such examples taught, I paint the cot,  
As truth will paint it, and as bards will not;  
Nor you, ye poor, of letter'd scorn complain,  
To you the smoothest song is smooth in vain;  
O'ercome by labour and bow'd down by time,  
Feel you the barren flattery of a rhyme?  
Can poets soothe you, when you pine for bread,  
By winding myrtles round your ruin'd shed?  
Can their light tales your weighty griefs o'erpower,  
Or glad with airy mirth the toilsome hour? '

This plea, we would remark by the way, is more plausible than satisfactory. By associating pleasing ideas with the poor, we incline

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the rich to extend their good offices to them. The cottage twined round with real myrtles, or with the poet's wreath, will invite the hand of kindly assistance sooner than Mr. Crabbe's naked 'ruin'd shed'; for though unusual, unexpected distress excites compassion, that which is uniform and remediless produces nothing but disgust and indifference. Repulsive objects (or those which are painted so) do not conciliate affection, or soften the heart.

' Lo ! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er,  
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;  
From thence a length of burning sand appears,  
Where the thin harvest waves its withered ears;  
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,  
Reign o'er the land and rob the blighted rye;  
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,  
*And to the ragged infant threaten war*;<sup>1</sup>  
There poppies nodding mock the hope of toil;  
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;  
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,  
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;  
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,  
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;  
With mingled tints the rocky coast abound,  
And a sad splendour vainly shines around.  
So looks the nymph whom wretched arts adorn,  
Betrayed by man, then left for man to scorn;  
Whose cheek in vain assumes the mimic rose,  
While her sad eyes the troubled breast disclose;  
Whose outward splendour is but folly's dress,  
Exposing most, when most it gilds distress.'

This is a specimen of Mr. Crabbe's taste in landscape-painting, of the power, the accuracy, and the hardness of his pencil. If this were merely a spot upon the canvas, which might act as a foil to more luxuriant and happier scenes, it would be well. But our valetudinarian 'travels from Dan to Beersheba, and cries it is all barren.' Or if he lights 'in a favouring hour' on some more favoured spot, where plenty smiles around, he then turns his hand to his human figures, and the balance of the account is still very much against Providence, and the blessings of the English Constitution. Let us see.

' But these are scenes where Nature's niggard hand  
Gave a spare portion to the famish'd land;  
Hers is the fault, if here mankind complain  
Of fruitless toil and labour spent in vain;

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<sup>1</sup> This is a pleasing line; because the unconsciousness to the mischief in the child is a playful relief to the mind, and the picturesqueness of the imagery gives it double point and *naïveté*.

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But yet in other scenes more fair in view,  
Where plenty smiles—alas ! she smiles for few—  
And those who taste not, yet behold her store,  
Are as the slaves that dig the golden ore,  
The wealth around them makes them doubly poor.

Or will you deem them amply paid in health,  
Labour's fair child, that languishes with wealth ?  
Go then ! and see them rising with the sun,  
Through a long course of daily toil to run ;  
See them beneath the dog-star's raging heat,<sup>1</sup>  
When the knees tremble and the temples beat ;  
Behold them, leaning on their scythes, look o'er  
The labour past, and toils to come explore ;  
See them alternate suns and showers engage,  
And hoard up aches and anguish for their age ;  
Who fens and marshy moors their steps pursue,  
When their warm pores imbibe the evening dew,  
Then own that labour may as fatal be  
To these thy slaves, as thine excess to thee.'

Grant all this to be true ; nay, let it be told, but not told in ' mincing poetry.' Next comes the **WORKHOUSE**, and this, it must be owned, is a master-piece of description, and the climax of the author's inverted system of rural optimism.

' Thus groan the Old, till by disease oppress,  
They taste a final woe, and then they rest.  
Theirs is yon house that holds the parish poor,  
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door ;  
There, where the putrid vapours, flagging, play,  
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day ;—  
There children dwell who know no parents' care ;  
Parents, who know no children's love, dwell there !  
Heart-broken matrons on their joyless bed,  
Forsaken wives and mothers never wed ;

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<sup>1</sup> This seems almost a parody on the lines in Shakespeare.

' Not all these, laid in bed majestical,  
Can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave,  
Who with a body fill'd and vacant mind,  
Gets him to rest, cramm'd with distressful bread ;  
Never sees horrid night, the child of hell ;  
But like a lackey, from the rise to set,  
Sweats in the eye of Phoebus, and all night  
Sleeps in Elysium ; next day, after dawn,  
Doth rise and help Hyperion to his horse ;  
And follows so the ever-running year  
With profitable labour to his grave ;  
And, but for ceremony, such a wretch,  
Winding up days with toil and nights with sleep,  
Hath the forehand and vantage of a king.' *Henry V.*

Who shall decide where two such authorities disagree !



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Dejected widows with unheeded tears,  
And crippled age with more than childhood fears;  
The lame, the blind, and, far the happiest they !  
The moping idiot and the madman gay.  
Here too the sick their final doom receive,  
Were brought, amid the scenes of grief, to grieve,  
Where the loud groans from some sad chamber flow,  
Mix'd with the clamours of the crowd below;  
Here sorrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan,  
And the cold charities of man to man;  
Whose laws indeed for ruin'd age provide,  
And strong compulsion plucks the scrap from pride;  
But still that scrap is bought with many a sigh,  
And pride embitters what it can't deny.

Such is that room which one rude beam divides,  
And naked rafters form the sloping sides;  
Where the vile bands that bind the thatch are seen,  
And lath and mud are all that lie between,  
Save one dull pane, that, coarsely patch'd, gives way  
To the rude tempest, yet excludes the day;  
Here on a matted flock, with dust o'erspread,  
The drooping wretch reclines his languid head;  
For him no hand the cordial cup applies,  
Or wipes the tear that stagnates in his eyes;<sup>1</sup>  
No friends with soft discourse his pain beguile,  
And promise hope till sickness wears a smile.

Now once again the gloomy scene explore,  
Less gloomy now the bitter hour is o'er,  
The man of many sorrows sighs no more.—  
Up yonder hill, behold how sadly slow  
The bier moves winding from the vale below;  
There lie the happy dead, from trouble free,  
And the glad parish pays the frugal fee;  
No more, O Death ! thy victim starts to hear  
A churchwarden stern, or kingly Overseer;  
No more the farmer claims his humble bow  
Thou art his lord, the best of tyrants thou !

Now to the church behold the Mourners come,  
Sedately torpid and devoutly dumb;  
The village-children now their games suspend,  
To see the bier that bears their ancient friend;  
For he was one in all their idle sport,  
And like a monarch rul'd their little court;  
The pliant bow he form'd, the flying ball,  
The bat, the wicket were his labours all;  
*Him now they follow to his grave, and stand*  
*Silent and sad, and gazing, hand in hand ;*  
While bending low, their eager eyes explore  
The mingled relics of the parish-poor;

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<sup>1</sup> ' And the motion unsettles a tear,'—Wordsworth.

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The bell tolls, late, the moping owl flies round,  
Fear marks the flight and magnifies the sound;  
The busy priest, detain'd by weightier care,  
Defers his duty till the day of prayer;  
And waiting long, the crowd retire distressed  
To think a poor man's bones should lie unblest.'

To put our taste in poetry, and the fairness of our opinion of Mr. Crabbe's in particular, to the test at once, we will confess, that we think the two lines we have marked in italics :

' Him now they follow to his grave, and stand  
Silent and sad, and gazing, hand in hand '—

worth nearly all the rest of his verses put together, and an unanswerable condemnation of their general tendency and spirit. It is images, such as these, that the polished mirror of the poet's mind ought chiefly to convey; that cast their soothing, startling reflection over the length of human life, and grace with their amiable innocence its closing scenes; while its less alluring and more sombre tints sink in, and are lost in an absorbent ground of unrelieved prose. Poetry should be the handmaid of the imagination, and the foster-nurse of pleasure and beauty: Mr. Crabbe's Muse is a determined enemy to the imagination, and a spy on nature.

Before we proceed, we shall just mark a few of those quaintnesses of expression, by which our descriptive poet has endeavoured to vary his style from common prose, and so far has succeeded. Speaking of Quarle he says :

' Of Hermit Quarle we read, in island rare,  
Far from mankind and seeming far from care;  
Safe from all want, and sound in every limb;  
Yes! there was he, and there was care with him.'

' Here are no wheels for either wool or flax,  
But packs of cards—made up of sundry packs.'

' Fresh were his features, his attire was new;  
Clean was his linen, and his jacket blue:  
Of finest *jean*, his trowsers, tight and trim,  
Brush'd the large buckle at the silver rim.'

To compare small things with great, this last touch of minute description is not unlike that in Theseus's description of his hounds :

' With ears that sweep away the morning dew.'

' Alas! your reverence, wanton thoughts, I grant,  
Were once my motive, now the thoughts of want.'

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Women like me, as ducks in a decoy,  
Swim down a stream, and seem to swim in joy.'

' But from the day, that fatal day she spied  
The pride of Daniel, Daniel was her pride.'

As an instance of the *curiosa felicitas* in descriptive allusion (among many others) take the following. Our author, referring to the names of the genteeler couples, written in the parish-register, thus ' morals ' on the circumstance :

' How fair these names, how much unlike they look  
To all the blurr'd subscriptions in my book !  
The bridegroom's letters stand in a row above,  
Tapering yet stout, like pine-trees in his grove ;  
While free and fine the bride's appear below,  
As light and slender as her jasmies grow.—  
Mark now in what confusion stoop or stand  
The crooked scrawls of many a clownish hand  
Now out, now in, they droop, they fall, they rise,  
Like raw recruits drawn forth for exercise.  
Much have I tried to guide the fist along,  
But still the blunderers placed their blottings wrong ;  
Behold these marks uncouth ! how strange that men,  
Who guide the plough, should fail to guide the pen ;  
For half a mile, the furrows even lie,  
For half an inch the letters stand awry.'

The *Library* and the *Newspaper*, in the same volume, are heavy and common-place. Mr. Crabbe merely sermonises in his didactic poetry. He must pierce below the surface to get at his genuine vein. He is properly himself only in the petty and the painful. The *Birth of Flattery* is a homely, incondite lay. The author is no more like Spenser than he is like Pope. The ballad of Sir Eustace Grey is a production of great power and genius. The poet, in treating of the wanderings of a maniac, has given a loose to his conception of imaginary and preternatural evils. But they are of a sort that chill, rather than melt the mind ; they repel instead of haunting it. They might be said to be square, portable horrors, physical, external, not shadowy, not malleable ; they do not arise out of any passion in the mind of the sufferer, nor touch the reader with involuntary sympathy. Beds of ice, seas of fire, shaking bogs, and fields of snow, are disagreeable matters of fact ; and though their contact has a powerful effect on the senses, we soon shake them off in fancy. Let any one compare this fictitious legend with the unadorned, unvarnished tale of Peter Grimes, and he will see in what Mr. Crabbe's characteristic strength lies. He is a most potent copyist of actual nature, though not otherwise a great poet. In the case of Sir Eustace, he cannot conjure up any

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phantoms from a disordered imagination; but he makes honest Peter, the fisherman of the Borough, see visions in the mud where he had drowned his 'prentice boys, that are as ghastly and bewitching as any mermaid. We cannot resist giving the scene of this striking story, which is in our author's exclusive manner. 'Within that circle none durst walk but he.'

'Thus by himself compell'd to live each day,  
To wait for certain hours the tide's delay;  
At the same times the same dull views to see,  
The bounding marsh-bank and the blighted tree;  
The water only when the tides were high,  
When low, the mud half-covered and half-dry;  
The sun-burnt tar that blisters on the planks,  
And bank-side stakes in their uneven ranks;  
Heaps of entangled weeds that slowly float,  
As the tide rolls by the impeded boat.

When tides were neap, and in the sultry day,  
Through the tall bounding mud-banks made their way,  
Which on each side rose swelling, and below  
The dark warm flood ran silently and slow;  
There anchoring, Peter chose from man to hide,  
There hang his head, and view the lazy tide  
In its hot slimy channel slowly glide;  
Where the small eels, that left the deeper way  
For the warm shore, within the shallows play;  
Where gaping muscles, left upon the mud,  
Slope their slow passage to the fall'n flood:  
Here dull and hopeless he 'd lie down and trace  
How side-long crabs had crawled their crooked race;  
Or sadly listen to the tuneless cry  
Of fishing gull or clanging golden-eye;  
What time the sea-birds to the marsh would come,  
And the loud bittern, from the bull-rush home,  
Gave from the salt-ditch-side the bellowing boom:  
He nursed the feelings these dull scenes produce  
And loved to stop beside the opening sluice;  
Where the small stream, confined in narrow bound,  
Ran with a dull, unvaried, saddening sound;  
Where all, presented to the eye or ear,  
Oppressed the soul with misery, grief, and fear.'

This is an exact *fac-simile* of some of the most unlovely parts of the creation. Indeed the whole of Mr. Crabbe's *Borough*, from which the above passage is taken, is done so to the life, that it seems almost like some sea-monster, crawled out of the neighbouring slime, and harbouring a breed of strange vermin, with a strong local scent of tar and bulge-water.—Mr. Crabbe's *Tales* are more readable than his Poems. But in proportion as the interest increases, they become more oppressive. They turn, one and all, upon the same sort of

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teazing, helpless, mechanical, unimaginative distress;—and though it is not easy to lay them down, you never wish to take them up again. Still in this way, they are highly finished, striking, and original portraits,—worked out with an eye to nature, and an intimate knowledge of the small and intricate folds of the human heart. Some of the best are the *Confidant*, the story of *Silly Shore*, the *Young Poet*, the *Painter*;—the episode of *Phœbe Dawson* in the *Village*, is one of the most tender and pensive; and the character of the methodist parson, who persecutes the sailor's widow with his godly, selfish love, is one of the most profound. In a word, if Mr. Crabbe's writings do not add greatly to the store of entertaining and delightful fiction, yet they will remain, 'as a thorn in the side of poetry,' perhaps for a century to come!

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*The London Magazine.*

June, 1821.

THIS is a very proper letter for a lord to write to his bookseller, and for Mr. Murray to show about among his friends, as it contains some dry rubs at Mr. Bowles, and some good hits at Mr. Southey and his 'invariable principles.' There is some good *bating*, and some good writing in it, some coarse jests, and some dogmatical assertions; but that it is by any means a *settler* of the question, is what we are in all due form inclined to doubt. His Lordship, as a poet, is a little headstrong and self-willed, a spoiled child of nature and fortune: his philosophy and criticism have a tincture of the same spirit: he doles out his opinions with a great deal of frankness and spleen, saying, 'this I like, that I loathe;' but he does not trouble himself, or the reader, with his reasons, any more than he accounts to his servants for the directions he gives them. This might seem too great a compliment in his Lordship to the public.

All this *pibble-prabble* about Pope, and Milton, and Shakspeare, and what foreigners say of us, and the *Venus*, and *Antinous*, and the *Acropolis*, and the *Grand Canal* at Venice, and the *Turkish fleet*, and *Falconer's Shipwreck*, and ethics, and ethical poetry (with the single exception of some bold picturesque sketches in the poet's best prose-style) is what might be talked by any Bond-street loungee of them all, after a last night's debauch, in the intervals between the splashings of the soda-water and the acid taste of the port wine rising in the mouth. It is no better than that. If his Lordship had sent

<sup>1</sup> Letter to .... on the Rev. W. L. Bowles's *Strictures on the Life and Writings of Pope*. By the Right Hon. Lord Byron. Third Edition. Murray.

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it in from Long's, or the Albany, to be handed about in Albemarle-street, in slips as he wrote it, it would have been very well. But all the way from Ravenna, cannot he contrive to send us something better than his own ill-humour and our own common-places—than the discovery that Pope was a poet, and that Cowper was none; and the old story that Canova, in forming a statue, takes a hand from one, a foot from another, and a nose from a third, and so makes out the idea of perfect beauty! (We would advise his Lordship to say less about this subject of *virtù*, for he knows little about it: and besides, his perceptions are at variance with his theories.) In truth, his Lordship has the worst of this controversy, though he throws out a number of pert, smart, flashy things, with the air of a man who sees company on subjects of taste, while his reverend antagonist, who is the better critic and logician of the two, goes prosing on in a tone of obsequious pertinacity and sore pleasantry, as if he were sitting (an unwelcome guest) at his Lordship's table, and were awed, yet galled, by the cavalier assumption of patrician manners. We cannot understand these startling *voluntaries*, played off before the public on the ground of personal rank, nor the controversial under-song, like the drone of a bagpipe, that forms a tedious accompaniment to them. As Jem Belcher, when asked if he did not feel a little awkward at facing Gamble the tall Irishman, made answer, 'An please ye, sir, when I am stript to my shirt, I am afraid of no man;'—so we would advise Mr. Bowles, in a question of naked argument, to fear no man, and to let no man bite his thumb at him. If his Lordship were to invite his brother-poet to his house, and to eke out a sour jest by the flavour of Monte-Pulciano or Frontiniac,—if in the dearth of argument he were to ply his friend's weak side with rich sauces and well seasoned hospitality, '*Ab! ça est bon, ah! goutez ça!*'—if he were to point, in illustration of Pope's style, to the marble pillars, the virandas, the pier glasses, the classic busts, the flowering dessert, and were to exclaim, 'You see, my dear Bowles, the superiority of art over nature, the triumph of polished life over Gothic barbarism: we have here neither the ghosts nor fairies of Shakspeare, nor Milton's Heaven, nor *his* Hell, yet we contrive to do without them;'—it might require Parson Supple's command of countenance to smile off this uncourteous address; but the divine would not have to digest such awkward raillery on an empty stomach—he would have his *quid pro quo*: his Lordship would have paid for the liberty of using his privilege of peerage. But why any man should carry the rôle of his Lordship's chaplain out of his Lordship's house, is what we see no reason for.—Lord Byron, in the Preface to his Tragedy, complains that Horace Walpole has had hard measure

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dealt him by the critics, 'firstly, because he was a lord, and secondly, because he was a gentleman.' We do not know how the case may stand between the public and a dead nobleman : but a living lord has every reasonable allowance made him, and can do what no one else can. If Lord Byron chooses to make a bad joke, by means of an ill-spelt pun, it is a condescension in his Lordship :—if he puts off a set of smart assertions and school-boy instances for pithy proofs, it is not because he is not able, but because he cannot be at the pains of going deeper into the question :—if he is rude to an antagonist, it is construed into agreeable familiarity ; any notice from so great a man appears like a favour :—if he tells or recommends 'a tale of bawdry,' he is not to be tied down by the petty rules which restrict common men :—if he publishes a work, which is thought of too equivocal a description for the delicate air of Albemarle-street, his Lordship's own name in the title-page is sufficient to back it without the formality of a book-seller's ; if a wire-drawn tragedy of his is acted, in spite of his protestations against such an appeal to the taste of a vulgar audience, the storm of pitiless damnation is not let loose upon it, because it is felt that it would fall harmless on so high and proud a head ; the gilded coronet serves as a conductor to carry off the lightning of popular criticism, which might blast the merely laurelled bard ; the blame, the disappointment, the flat effect, is thrown upon the manager, upon the actors—upon any body but the Noble Poet ! This sounding title swells the mouth of Fame, and lends her voice a thousand circling echoes : the rank of the Author, and the public charity extended to him, as he does not want it, cover a multitude of sins. What does his Lordship mean, then by this whining over the neglect of Horace Walpole,—this uncalled-for sympathy with the faded lustre of patrician and gentlemanly pretensions ? Has *he* had only half his fame ? Or, does he already feel, with morbid anticipation, the retiring ebb of that over-whelming tide of popularity, which having been raised too high by adventitious circumstances, is lost in flats and shallows, as soon as their influence is withdrawn ? Lord Byron has been twice as much talked of as he would have been, had he not been Lord Byron. His rank and genius have been happily placed 'each other's beams to share,' and both together, by their mutually reflected splendour, may be said to have melted the public coldness into the very wantonness of praise : the faults of the man (real or supposed) have only given a dramatic interest to his works. Whence, then, this repining, this ungracious cavilling, this *got-up* ill-humour ? We load his Lordship with ecstatic admiration, with unqualified ostentatious eulogies ; and he throws them stifling back in our face : he thanks us with cool, cutting contempt : he asks us for

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our voices, 'our sweet voices,' like Coriolanus; and, like Coriolanus, disdains us for the unwholesome gift. Why, then, does he ask for it? If, as a lord, he holds in contempt and abhorrence the willing, delighted homage, which the public pay to the poet, let him retire and feed the pride of birth in stately solitude, or take his place among his equals: but if he does not find this enough, and wants our wondering tribute of applause to satisfy his craving vanity, and make him something more than a mere vulgar lord among hundreds of other lords, why dash the cup of delicious poison, which, at his uneasy request, we tender him, to the ground, with indignant reckless hands, and tell us he scorns equally our censure or our praise? If he looks upon both as equal impertinence, he can easily escape out of the reach of both by ceasing to write; we shall in that case soon cease to think of his Lordship: but if he cannot do without our good opinion, why affect all this coyness, coldness, and contempt? If he says he writes not to please us, but to live by us, that only alters the nature of the obligation, and he might still be civil to Mr. Murray's customers. Whether he is independent of public opinion, or dependent on it, he need not be always sending his readers to Coventry. When we come to offer him our demonstrations of good will, he should not kick us down stairs. If he persists in this humour, the distaste may in time 'become mutual.'

Before we proceed, there is one thing in which we must say we heartily agree with Lord Byron; and that is the ridicule with which he treats Mr. Bowles's editorial inquisition into the moral character of Pope. It is a pure piece of clerical priggism. If Pope was not free from vice, we should like to know who is. He was one of the most faultless of poets, both in his life and in his writings. We should not care to throw the first stone at him. We do not wonder at Lord Byron's laughing outright at Mr. Bowles's hysterical horrors at poor Pope's platonic peccadillos, nor at his being a little impatient of the other's attempt to make himself a *make-believe* character of perfection out of the 'most small faults' he could rake up against the reputation of an author, whom he was bound either not to edit or not to injure. But we think his Lordship turns the tables upon the divine, and gets up into the reading desk himself, without the proper canonical credentials, when he makes such a fuss as he does about didactic or moral poetry as the highest of all others, because moral truth and moral conduct are of such vast and paramount concernment in human life. But because they are such good things in themselves, does it follow that they are the better for being put into rhyme? We see no connection between 'ends of verse, and sayings of philosophers.' This reasoning reminds us of the critic who said, that 'the only



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poetry he knew of, good for any thing, was the four lines, beginning 'Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November,' for that these were really of some use in finding out the number of days in the different months of the year. The rules of arithmetic are important in many respects, but we do not know that they are the fittest subjects of poetry. Besides, Pope was not the only moral poet, nor are we sure that we understand his moral system, or that Lord Byron understands it, or that he understood it himself. Addison paraphrased the Psalms, and Blackmore sung the Creation: yet Pope has written a lampoon upon the one, and put the other in his *Dunciad*. Mr. Bowles has numbers of manuscript sermons by him, the morality of which, we will venture to say, is quite as pure, as orthodox, as that of the unpublished cantos of *Don Juan*; yet we doubt whether Mr. Murray, the *Mecænas* of poetry and orthodoxy, would give as much for the one as for the other. We do not look for the flowers of fancy in moral treatises, nor for a homily in his Lordship's irregular stanzas. The Decalogue, as a practical prose composition, or as a body of moral laws and precepts, is of sufficient weight and authority; but we should not regard the putting this into heroic verse, as an effort of the highest poetry. That 'Sternhold and Hopkins had great qualms' is no imputation on the pious raptures of the Hebrew bard: and we suspect his Lordship himself would object to the allegory in Spenser, as a drawback on the poetry, if it is in other respects to his Lordship's taste, which is more than we can pretend to determine. The Noble Letter-writer thus moralizes on this subject and transposes the ordinary critical canons somewhat arbitrarily and sophistically.

'The depreciation of Pope is partly founded upon a false idea of the dignity of his order of poetry, to which he has partly contributed by the ingenuous boast,

"That not in Fancy's maze he wander'd long,  
But *stoop'd* to Truth, and moraliz'd his song."

'He should have written "rose to truth."' In my mind the highest of all poetry is ethical poetry, as the highest of all earthly objects must be moral truth. Religion does not make a part of my subject; it is something beyond human hands except Milton's and Dante's, and even Dante's powers are involved in his delineation of human passions, though in supernatural circumstances. What made Socrates the greatest of men? His moral truth—his ethics. What proved Jesus Christ the Son of God hardly less than his miracles? His moral precepts. And if ethics have made a philosopher the first of men, and have not been disdained as an adjunct to his Gospel by the

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Deity himself, are we to be told that ethical poetry, or didactic poetry, or by whatever name you term it, whose object is to make men better and wiser, is not the *very first order* of poetry; and are we to be told this too by one of the priesthood? It requires more mind, more wisdom, more power, than all the "forests" that ever were "walked" for their "description," and all the epics that ever were founded upon fields of battle. The Georgics are indisputably, and, I believe, *undisputedly*, even a finer poem than the Æneid. Virgil knew this: he did not order *them* to be burnt.

"The proper study of mankind is man."

'It is the fashion of the day to lay great stress upon what they call "imagination" and "invention,"—the two commonest of qualities: an Irish peasant, with a little whiskey in his head, will imagine and invent more than would furnish forth a modern poem. If Lucretius had not been spoiled by the Epicurean system, we should have had a far superior poem to any now in existence. As mere poetry, it is the first of Latin poems. What then has ruined it? His ethics. Pope has not this defect: his moral is as pure as his poetry is glorious.' P. 42.

Really this is very inconsequential, incongruous reasoning. An Irish peasant, with a little whiskey in his head, would not fall upon more blunders, contradictions, and defective conclusions. Lord Byron talks of the ethical systems of Socrates and Jesus Christ. What made the former the great man he supposes?—The invention of his system—the discovery of sublime moral truths. Does Lord Byron mean to say, that the mere repetition of the same precepts in prose, or the turning them into verse, will make others as great, or will make a great man at all? The two things compared are wholly disparates. The finding out the 48th proposition in Euclid made Pythagoras a great man. Shall we say that the putting this into a grave, didactic distich would make either a great mathematician or a great poet? It would do neither one nor the other; though, according to Lord Byron, this distich would belong to the highest class of poetry, 'because it would do that in verse, which one of the greatest of men had wished to accomplish in prose.' Such is the way in which his Lordship transposes the common sense of the question, —because it is his humour! The value of any moral truth depends on the philosophic invention implied in it. But this rests with the first author, and the general idea, which forms the basis of didactic poetry, remains the same, through all its mechanical transmissions afterwards. The merit of the ethical poet must therefore consist in his manner of adorning and illustrating a number of these general

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truths which are not his own, that is, in the poetical invention and imagination he brings to the subject, as Mr. Bowles has well shown, with respect to the episodes in the *Essay on Man*, the description of the poor Indian and the lamb doomed to death, which are all the unsophisticated reader ever remembers of that much-talked-of production. Lord Byron clownishly chooses to consider all poetry but what relates to this ethical or didactic truth as 'a lie.' Is *Lear* a lie? Or does his Lordship prefer the story, or the moral, in *Æsop's Fables*? He asks 'why must the *poet* mean the *liar*, the *feigner*, the *tale-teller*? A man may make and create better things than these.'—He may make and create better things than a common-place, and he who does not, makes and creates nothing. The ethical or didactic poet necessarily repeats after others, because general truths and maxims are limited. The individual instances and illustrations, which his Lordship qualifies as 'lies,' 'feigning,' and 'tale-telling,' are infinite, and give endless scope to the genius of the true poet. The rank of poetry is to be judged of by the truth and purity of the moral—so we find it 'in the bond,'—and yet Cowper, we are told, was no poet. Is there any keeping in this, or is it merely an air? Again, we are given to understand that didactic poetry 'requires more mind, more power than all the descriptive or epic poetry that ever was written : ' and as a proof of this, his Lordship lays it down, that the *Georgics* are a finer poem than the *Æneid*. We do not perceive the inference here. 'Virgil knew this: he did not order *them* to be burnt.

"The proper study of mankind is man."'

Does our author mean that this was Virgil's reason for liking his pastoral poetry better than his description of Dido and *Æneas*? But farther, there is a Latin poem (that of Lucretius) superior even to the *Georgics*; nay, it would have been so to any poem now in existence, but for one unlucky circumstance. And what is that? 'Its ethics!' So that ethics have spoiled the finest poem in the world. This is the rub that makes didactic poetry come in such a questionable shape. If original, like Lucretius, there will be a difference of opinion about it. If trite and acknowledged, like Pope, however pure, there will be little valuable in it. It is the glory and the privilege of poetry to be conversant about those truths of nature and the heart that are at once original and self-evident. His Lordship ought to *have known this*. In the same passage, he speaks of imagination and invention as 'the two commonest of qualities.' We will tell his Lordship what is commoner, the want of them. 'An Irish peasant,' he adds, 'with a little whiskey in his head, will imagine and invent more than'—(What? Homer, Spenser, and

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Ariosto? No: but than)—‘would furnish forth a modern poem.’ That we will not dispute. But at any rate, when sober next morning, he would be as ‘full of wise saws and modern instances’ as his Lordship; and in either case, equally positive, tetchy, and absurd!

His Lordship, throughout his pamphlet, makes a point of contradicting Mr. Bowles, and, it would seem, of contradicting himself. He cannot be said to have any opinions of his own, but whatever any one else advances, he denies out of mere spleen and rashness. ‘He hates the word *invariable*,’ and not without reason. ‘What is there of human, be it poetry, philosophy, wit, wisdom, science, power, glory, mind, matter, life, or death, which is invariable?’—‘There is one of the particulars in this enumeration, which seems pretty invariable, which is death. One would think that the principles of poetry are so too, notwithstanding his peevish disclaimer: for towards the conclusion of this letter he sets up Pope as a classic model, and considers all modern deviations from it as grotesque and barbarous.

‘They have raised a mosque by the side of a Grecian temple of the purest architecture; and, more barbarous than the barbarians from whose practice I have borrowed the figure, they are not contented with their own grotesque edifice, unless they destroy *the prior and purely beautiful fabric which preceded*,<sup>1</sup> and which shames them and theirs for ever and ever.’

Lord Byron has here substituted his own invariable principles for Mr. Bowles’s, which he hates as bad as Mr. Southey’s variable politics. Will nothing please his Lordship—neither dull fixtures nor shining weather-cocks?—We might multiply instances of a want of continuous reasoning, if we were fond of this sort of petty cavilling. Yet we do not know that there is any better quarry in the book. Why does his Lordship tell us that ‘ethical poetry is the highest of all poetry,’ and yet that ‘Petrarch the sonnetteer’ is esteemed by good judges the very highest poet of Italy? Mr. Bowles is a sonnetteer, and a very good one. Why does he assert that ‘the poet who executes the best is the highest, whatever his department,’ and then affirm in the next page that didactic poetry ‘requires more mind, more wisdom, more power than all the forests that ever were walked for their description;’ and then again, two pages after, that ‘a good poet can make a silk purse of a sow’s ear;’ that is, as he interprets it, ‘can imbue a pack of cards with more poetry than inhabits the forests of America?’ That’s a *Non Sequitur*, as Partridge has it. Why, contending that all subjects are alike indifferent to the genuine poet, does he turn round upon himself, and assume that ‘the sun

<sup>1</sup> We have ‘purest architecture’ just before; and ‘the prior fabric which preceded,’ is rather more than an inelegant pleonasm.

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shining upon a warming-pan cannot be made sublime or poetical? Why does he say that 'there is nothing in nature like the bust of the Antinous, except the Venus,' which is not in nature?<sup>1</sup> Why does he call the first 'that wonderful *creation* of perfect beauty,' when it is a mere portrait, and on that account so superior to his favourite coxcomb, the Apollo? Why does he state that 'more poetry cannot be gathered into existence' than we here see, and yet that this poetry arises neither from nature nor moral exaltedness; Mr. Bowles and he being at issue on this very point, *viz.* the one affirming that the essence of poetry is derived from nature, and his Lordship, that it consists in moral truth? Why does he consider a shipwreck as an artificial incident? Why does he make the excellence of Falconer's Shipwreck consist in its technicalities, and not in its faithful description of common feelings and inevitable calamity? Why does he say all this, and much more, which he should not? Why does he write prose at all? Yet, in spite of all this trash, there is one passage for which we forgive him, and here it is.

'The truth is, that in these days the grand *primum mobile* of England is *cant*: cant political, cant poetical, cant religious, cant moral; but always cant, multiplied through all the varieties of life. It is the fashion, and while it lasts, will be too powerful for those who can only exist by taking the tone of the times. I say *cant*, because it is a thing of words, without the smallest influence upon human actions; the English being no wiser, no better, and much poorer, and more divided among themselves, as well as far less moral, than they were before the prevalence of this verbal decorum.' These words should be written in letters of gold, as the testimony of a lofty poet to a great moral truth, and we can hardly have a quarrel with the writer of them.

There are three questions which form the subject of the present pamphlet; *viz.* What is poetical? What is natural? What is artificial? And we get an answer to none of them. The controversy, as it is carried on between the chief combatants, is much like a dispute between two artists, one of whom should maintain that blue is the only colour fit to paint with, and the other that yellow alone ought ever to be used. Much might be said on both sides, but little to the purpose. Mr. Campbell leads off the dance, and launches a ship as a beautiful and poetical artificial object. But he so loads it with patriotic, natural, and foreign associations, and the sails are 'so perfumed that the winds are love-sick,' that Mr. Bowles darts upon and seizes it as contraband to art, swearing that it is no longer the work of the shipwright, but of Mr. Campbell's lofty poetic imagination;

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Bowles's Two Letters.

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and dedicates its stolen beauty to the right owners, the sun, the winds, and the waves. Mr. Campbell, in his eagerness to make all sure, having overstepped the literal mark, presses no farther into the controversy; but Lord Byron, who is 'like an Irishman in a row, *any body's customer*,' carries it on with good polemical hardihood, and runs a very edifying parallel between the ship without the sun, the winds, and waves,—and the sun, the winds, and waves without the ship. 'The sun,' says Mr. Bowles, 'is poetical, by your Lordship's admission.' We think it would have been so without it. But his Lordship contends that 'the sun would no longer be poetical, if it did not shine on ships, or pyramids, or fortresses, and other works of art,' (he expressly excludes 'footmen's liveries' and 'brass warming-pans' from among those artificial objects that reflect new splendour on the eye of Heaven)—to which Mr. Bowles replies, that let the sun but shine, and 'it is poetical *per se*,' in which we think him right. His Lordship decompounds the wind into a *caput mortuum* of poetry, by making it howl through a pig-stye, instead of

'Roaming the illimitable ocean wide ;'

and turns a water-fall, or a clear spring, into a slop-basin, to prove that nature owes its elegance to art. His Lordship is 'ill at these numbers.' Again, he affirms that the ruined temple of the Parthenon is poetical, and the coast of Attica with Cape Colonna, and the recollection of Falconer's Shipwreck, classical. Who ever doubted it? What then? Does this prove that the Rape of the Lock is not a mock-heroic poem? He assures us that a storm with cock-boats scudding before it is interesting, particularly if this happens to take place in the Hellespont, over which the noble critic swam; and makes it a question, whether the dark cypress groves, or the white towers and minarets of Constantinople are more impressive to the imagination? What has this to do with Pope's grotto at Twickenham, or the boat in which he paddled across the Thames to Kew? Lord Byron tells us (and he should know) that the Grand Canal at Venice is a muddy ditch, without the stately palaces by its side; but then it is a natural, not an artificial canal; and finally, he asks, what would the desert of Tadmor be without the ruins of Palmyra, or Salisbury Plain without Stone-Henge? Mr. Bowles who, though tedious and teasing, has 'damnable iteration in him,' and has read the Fathers, answers very properly, by saying that a desert alone 'conveys ideas of immeasurable distance, of profound silence, of solitude;' and that Salisbury Plain has the advantage of Hounslow Heath, chiefly in getting rid of the ideas of artificial life, 'carts, caravans, raree-showmen, butchers' boys, coaches with coronets, and livery servants

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behind them,' even though Stone-Henge did not lift its pale head above its barren bosom. Indeed, Lord Byron's notions of art and poetry are sufficiently wild, romantic, far-fetched, obsolete: his taste is Oriental, Gothic; his Muse is not domesticated; there is nothing *mimminee-pimminee*, modern, polished, light, fluttering, in his standard of the sublime and beautiful: if his thoughts are proud, pampered, gorgeous, and disdain to mingle with the objects of humble, unadorned nature, his lordly eye at least 'keeps distance due' from the vulgar vanities of fashionable life; from drawing-rooms, from card-parties, and from courts. He is not a carpet poet. He does not sing the sofa, like poor Cowper. He is qualified neither for poet-laureate nor court-newsman. He is at issue with the Morning Post and Fashionable World, on what constitutes the true pathos and sublime of human life. He hardly thinks Lady Charlemont so good as the Venus, or as an Albanian girl, that he saw mending the road in the mountains. If he does not like flowers and forests, he cares as little for stars, garters, and prince's feathers, for diamond necklaces and paste-buckles. If his Lordship cannot make up his mind to the quiet, the innocence, the simple, unalterable grandeur of nature, we are sure that he hates the frippery, the foppery, and pert grimace of art, quite as much. His Lordship likes the poetry, the imaginative part of art, and so do we; and so we believe did the late Mr. John Scott. He likes the *sombre* part of it, the thoughtful, the decayed, the ideal, the spectral shadow of human greatness, the departed spirit of human power. He sympathizes not with art as a display of ingenuity, as the triumph of vanity or luxury, as it is connected with the idiot, superficial, petty self-complacency of the individual and the moment, (these are to him not 'luscious as locusts, but bitter as coloquintida'); but he sympathizes with the triumphs of Time and Fate over the proudest works of man—with the crumbling monuments of human glory—with the dim vestiges of countless generations of men—with that which claims alliance with the grave, or kindred with the elements of nature. This is what he calls art and artificial poetry. But this is not what any body else understands by the terms, commonly or critically speaking. There is as little connexion between the two things as between the grand-daughters of Mr. Coutts, who appeared at court the other day, and Lady Godiva—as there is between a reigning toast and an Egyptian mummy. Lord Byron, through the whole of the argument, pelts his reverend opponent with instances, like throwing a stone at a dog, which the incensed animal runs after, picks up, mumbles between his teeth, and tries to see what it is made of. The question is, however, too tough for Mr. Bowles's powers of mastication, and though the fray is amusing, nothing comes

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of it. Between the Editor of Pope, and the Editor of the New Monthly Magazine, his Lordship sits

‘ ——— high arbiter,  
And by decision more embroils the fray.’

What is the use of taking a work of art, from which ‘all the art of art is flown’ a mouldering statue, or a fallen column in Tadmor’s marble waste, that staggers and over-awes the mind, and gives birth to a thousand dim reflections, by seeing the power and pride of man prostrate, and laid low in the dust; what is there in this to prove the self-sufficiency of the upstart pride and power of man? A Ruin is poetical. Because it is a work of art, says Lord Byron. No, but because it is a work of art o’erthrown. In it we see, as in a mirror, the life, the hopes, the labour of man defeated, and crumbling away under the slow hand of time; and all that he has done reduced to nothing, or to a useless mockery. Or as one of the bread-and-butter poets has described the same thing a little differently, in his tale of Peter Bell the potter,—

‘ ——— The stones and tower  
Seem’d fading fast away  
From human thoughts and purposes,  
To yield to some transforming power,  
And blend with the surrounding trees.’

If this is what Lord Byron means by artificial objects and interests, there is an end of the question, for he will get no critic, no school to differ with him. But a fairer instance would be a snug citizen’s box by the road-side, newly painted, plastered and furnished, with every thing in the newest fashion and gloss, not an article the worse for wear, and a lease of one-and-twenty years to run, and then let us see what Lord Byron, or his friend and ‘host of Human Life’ will make of it, compared with the desolation, and the waste of all these comforts, arts, and elegances. Or let him take—not the pyramids of Egypt, but the pavilion at Brighton, and make a poetical description of it in prose or verse. We defy him. The poetical interest, in his Lordship’s transposed cases, arises out of the imaginary interest. But the truth is, that where art flourishes and attains its object, imagination droops, and poetry along with it. It ceases, or takes a different and ambiguous shape; it may be elegant, ingenious, pleasing, instructive, but if it aspires to the semblance of a higher interest, or the ornaments of the highest fancy, it necessarily becomes burlesque, as for instance, in the Rape of the Lock. As novels end with marriage, poetry ends with the consummation and success of art. And the reason (if Lord Byron would attend to it) is pretty obvious.



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Where all the wishes and wants are supplied, anticipated by art, there can be no strong cravings after ideal good, nor dread of unimaginable evils; the sources of terror and pity must be dried up: where the hand has done every thing, nothing is left for the imagination to do or to attempt: where all is regulated by conventional indifference, the full workings, the involuntary, uncontrollable emotions of the heart cease: property is not a poetical, but a practical prosaic idea, to those who possess and clutch it; and cuts off others from cordial sympathy; but nature is common property, the unenvied idol of all eyes, the fairy ground where fancy plays her tricks and feats; and the passions, the workings of the heart (which Mr. Bowles very properly distinguishes from manners, inasmuch as they are not in the power of the will to regulate or satisfy) are still left as a subject for something very different from didactic or mock-heroic poetry. By *art* and *artificial*, as these terms are applied to poetry or human life, we mean those objects and feelings which depend for their subsistence and perfection on the will and arbitrary conventions of man and society; and by nature, and natural subjects, we mean those objects which exist in the universe at large, without, or in spite of, the interference of human power and contrivance, and those interests and affections which are not amenable to the human will. That we are to exclude art, or the operation of the human will, from poetry altogether, is what we do not affirm; but we mean to say, that where this operation is the most complete and manifest, as in the creation of given objects, or regulation of certain feelings, there the spring of poetry, *i.e.* of passion and imagination, is proportionably and much impaired. We are masters of Art, Nature is our master; and it is to this greater power that we find working above, about, and within us, that the genius of poetry bows and offers up its highest homage. If the infusion of art were not a natural disqualifier for poetry, the most artificial objects and manners would be the most poetical: on the contrary, it is only the rude beginnings, or the ruinous decay of objects of art, or the simplest modes of life and manners, that admit of, or harmonize kindly with, the tone and language of poetry. To consider the question otherwise, is not to consider it too curiously, but not to understand it at all. Lord Byron talks of Ulysses striking his horse Rhesus with his bow, as an instance of the heroic in poetry. But does not the poetical dignity of the instrument arise from its very commonness and simplicity? A bow is not a supererogation of the works of art. It is almost peculiar to a state of nature, that is, the first and rudest state of society. Lord Byron might as well talk of a shepherd's crook, or the garland of flowers with which he crowns his mistress, as images borrowed from artificial life. He

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cannot make a gentleman-usher's rod poetical, though it is the pink of courtly and gentlemanly refinement. Will the bold stickler for the artificial essence of poetry translate Pope's description of Sir Plume,—

'Of amber-headed snuff-box justly vain,  
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane,'—

into the same sort of poetry as Homer's description of the bow of Ulysses? It is out of the question. The very mention of the last has a sound with it like the twang of the bow itself; whereas the others, the snuff-box and clouded cane, are of the very essence of effeminate impertinence. Pope says, in Spence's *Anecdotes*, that 'a lady of fashion would admire a star, because it would remind her of the twinkling of a lamp on a ball-night.' This is a much better account of his own poetry than his noble critic has given. It is a clue to a real solution of the difficulty. What is the difference between the feeling with which we contemplate a gas-light in one of the squares, and the crescent moon beside it, but this—that though the brightness, the beauty perhaps, to the mere sense, is the same or greater; yet we know that when we are out of the square we shall lose sight of the lamp, but that the moon will lend us its tributary light wherever we go; it streams over green valley or blue ocean alike; it is hung up in air, a part of the pageant of the universe; it steals with gradual, softened state into the soul, and hovers, a fairy apparition over our existence! It is this which makes it a more poetical object than a patent-lamp, or a Chinese lanthorn, or the chandelier at Covent-garden, brilliant as it is, and which, though it were made ten times more so, would still only dazzle and scorch the sight so much the more; it would not be attended with a mild train of reflected glory; it would 'denote no foregone conclusion,' would touch no chord of imagination or the heart; it would have nothing romantic about it.—A man can make any thing, but he cannot make a sentiment! It is a thing of inveterate prejudice, of old association, of common feelings, and so is poetry, as far as it is serious. A 'pack of cards,' a silver bodkin, a paste buckle, 'may be imbued' with as much mock poetry as you please, by lending false associations to it; but real poetry, or poetry of the highest order, can only be produced by unravelling the real web of associations, which have been wound round any subject by nature, and the unavoidable conditions of humanity. Not to admit this distinction at the threshold, is to confound the style of Tom Thumb with that of the Moor of Venice, or Hurlothrumbo with the Doge of Venice. It is to mistake jest for earnest, and one thing for another.

'How far that little candle throws its beams! .  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.'

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The image here is one of artificial life; but it is connected with natural circumstances and romantic interests, with darkness, with silence, with distance, with privation, and uncertain danger: it is common, obvious, without pretension or boast, and therefore the poetry founded upon it is natural, because the feelings are so. It is not the splendour of the candle itself, but the contrast to the gloom without,—the comfort, the relief it holds out from afar to the benighted traveller,—the conflict between nature and the first and cheapest resources of art, that constitutes the romantic and imaginary, that is, the poetical interest, in that familiar but striking image. There is more art in the lamp or chandelier; but for that very reason, there is less poetry. A light in a watch-tower, a beacon at sea, is sublime for the same cause; because the natural circumstances and associations set it off; it warns us against danger, it reminds us of common calamity, it promises safety and hope: it has to do with the broad feelings and circumstances of human life, and its interest does not assuredly turn upon the vanity or pretensions of the maker or proprietor of it. This sort of art is co-ordinate with nature, and comes into the first-class of poetry, but no one ever dreamt of the contrary. The features of nature are great leading land-marks, not near and little, or confined to a spot, or an individual claimant; they are spread out everywhere the same, and are of universal interest. The true poet has therefore been described as

‘Creation’s tenant, he is nature’s heir.’

What has been thus said of the man of genius might be said of the man of no genius. The spirit of poetry, and the spirit of humanity are the same. The productions of nature are not locked up in the cabinets of the curious, but spread out on the green lap of earth. The flowers return with the cuckoo in the spring: the daisy for ever looks bright in the sun; the rainbow still lifts its head above the storm to the eye of infancy or age—

‘So was it when my life began;  
So it is now I am a man,  
So shall it be till I grow old and die;’

but Lord Byron does not understand this, for he does not understand Mr. Wordsworth’s poetry, and we cannot make him. His Lordship’s nature, as well as his poetry, is something arabesque and outlandish.—Again, once more, what, we would ask, makes the difference between an opera of Mozart’s, and the singing of a thrush confined in a wooden cage at the corner of the street in which we live? The one is nature, and the other is art: the one is paid for, and the other

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is not. Madame Fodor sings the air of *Vedrai Carino* in *Don Giovanni* so divinely, because she is hired to sing it; she sings it to please the audience, not herself, and does not always like to be *encored* in it; but the thrush that awakes us at day-break with its song, does not sing because it is paid to sing, or to please others, or to be admired or criticised. It sings because it is happy: it pours the thrilling sounds from its throat, to relieve the over-flowings of its own breast—the liquid notes come from, and go to, the heart, dropping balm into it, as the gushing spring revives the traveller's parched and fainting lips. That stream of joy comes pure and fresh to the longing sense, free from art and affectation, the same that rises over vernal groves, mingled with the breath of morning, and the perfumes of the wild hyacinth; that waits for no audience, that wants no rehearsing, that exhausts its raptures, and still—

‘Hymns its good God, and carols sweet of love.’

There is this great difference between nature and art, that the one *is* what the other *seems*, and gives all the pleasure it expresses, because it feels it itself. Madame Fodor sings, as a musical instrument may be made to play a tune, and perhaps with no more real delight: but it is not so with the linnet or the thrush, that sings because God pleases, and pours out its little soul in pleasure. This is the reason why its singing is (so far) so much better than melody or harmony, than base or treble, than the Italian or the German School, than quavers or crotchets, or half-notes, or canzonets, or quartetts, or any thing in the world but truth and nature!

To give one more instance or two of what we understand by a natural interest ingrafted on artificial objects, and of the principle that still keeps them distinct. Amelia's ‘hashed mutton’ in Fielding, is one that I might mention. Hashed mutton is an article in cookery, homely enough in the scale of art, though far removed from the simple products of nature; yet we should say that this common delicacy which Amelia provided for her husband's supper, and then waited so long in vain for his return, is the foundation of one of the most natural and affecting incidents in one of the most natural and affecting books in the world. No description of the most splendid and luxurious banquet could come up to it. It will be remembered, when the *Almanach des Gourmands*, and even the article on it in the last Edinburgh Review, are forgotten. Did Lord Byron never read Boccacio? We wish he would learn refinement from him, and get rid of his hard *bravura* taste, and swashbuckler conclusions. What makes the charm of the Story of the Falcon? Is it properly art or nature? The tale is one of artificial life, and elegant manners, and

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chivalrous pretensions; but it is the fall from these, the decline into the vale of low and obscure poverty,—the having but one last loop left to hang life on, and the sacrifice of that to a feeling still more precious, and which could only give way with life itself,—that elevates the sentiment, and has made it find its way into all hearts. Had Frederigo Alberigi had an aviary of Hawks, and preserves of pheasants without end, he and his poor bird would never have been heard of. It is not the expence and ostentation of the entertainment he set before his mistress, but the prodigality of affection, squandering away the last remains of his once proud fortunes, that stamps this beautiful incident on the remembrance of all who have ever read it. We wish Lord Byron would look it over again, and see whether it does not most touch the chords of pathos and sentiment in those places where we feel the absence of all the pomp and vanities of art. Mr. Campbell talks of a ship as a sublime and beautiful object in art. We will confess we always stop to look at the mail-coaches with no slight emotion, and, perhaps, extend our hands after some of them, in sign of gratulation. They carry the letters of friends, of relations; they keep up the communication between the heart of a country. We do not admire them for their workmanship, for their speed, for their livery—there is something more in it than this. Perhaps we can explain it by saying, that we once heard a person observe—‘I always look at the Shrewsbury mail, and sometimes with tears in my eyes: that is the coach that will bring me the news of the death of my father and mother.’ His Lordship will say, the mail-coach is an artificial object. Yet we think the interest here was not founded upon that circumstance. There was a finer and deeper link of affection that did not depend on the red painted pannels, or the *dyed garments* of the coachman and guard. At least it strikes us so.

This is not an easy subject to illustrate, and it is still more difficult to define. Yet we shall attempt something of the sort.

1. Natural objects are common and obvious, and are imbued with an habitual and universal interest, without being vulgar. Familiarity in them does not breed contempt, as it does in the works of man. They form an ideal class; their repeated impression on the mind, in so many different circumstances, grows up into a sentiment. The reason is, that we refer them generally and collectively to ourselves, as links and mementos of our various being; whereas, we refer the works of art respectively to those by whom they are made or to whom they belong. This distracts the mind in looking at them, and gives a petty and unpoetical character to what we feel relating to them. When the works of art become poetical, it is when they are emancipated from this state of ‘circumscription and confine,’ by some

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circumstance that sets aside the idea of property and individual distinction. The sound of village bells,—

‘ —The poor man’s only music,’<sup>1</sup>

excites as lively an interest in the mind, as the warbling of a thrush : the sight of a village spire presents nothing discordant with the surrounding scenery.

2. Natural objects are more akin to poetry and the imagination, partly because they are not our own handy-work, but start up spontaneously, like a visionary creation, of their own accord, without our knowledge or connivance.—

‘ The earth hath bubbles, as the water hath,  
And these are of them ;—’

and farther, they have this advantage over the works of art, that the latter either fall short of their preconceived intention, and excite our disgust and disappointment by their defects ; or, if they completely answer their end, they then leave nothing to the imagination, and so excite little or no romantic interest that way. A Count Rumford stove, or a Dutch oven, are useful for the purposes of warmth or culinary dispatch. Gray’s purring favourite would find great comfort in warming its nose before the one, or dipping its whiskers in the other ; and so does the artificial animal, man : but the poetry of Rumford grates or Dutch ovens, it would puzzle even Lord Byron to explain. Cowper has made something of the ‘ loud-hissing urn,’ though Mr. Southey, as being one of the more refined ‘ naturals,’ still prefers ‘ the song of the kettle.’ The more our senses, our self-love, our eyes and ears, are surrounded, and, as it were, saturated with artificial enjoyments and costly decorations, the more the avenues to the imagination and the heart are unavoidably blocked up. We do not say, that this may not be an advantage to the individual ; we say it is a disadvantage to the poet. Even ‘ Mine Host of Human Life ’ has felt its palsyng, enervating influence. Let any one (after ten years old) take shelter from a shower of rain in Exeter Change, and see how he will amuse the time with looking over the trinkets, the chains, the seals, the curious works of art. Compare this with the description of Una and the Red Cross Knight in Spenser :

‘ Enforc’d to seek some covert nigh at hand,  
A shady grove not far away they spied,  
That promis’d aid the tempest to with-stand :  
Whose lofty trees, yclad with summer’s pride,

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<sup>1</sup> Coleridge.

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Did spread so broad, that heaven's light did hide,  
Not pierceable with power of any star;  
And all within were paths and alleys wide,  
With footing worn, and leading inward far;  
Far harbour that them seems : so in they enter'd are.

And forth they pass, with pleasure forward led,  
Joying to hear the birds' sweet harmony,  
Which therein shrowded from the tempest's dread,  
Seem'd in their song to scorn the cruel sky.  
Much can they praise the trees so straight and high,  
The sailing pine, the cedar proud and tall,  
The vine-prop elm, the poplar never dry,  
The builder oak, sole king of forests all,  
The aspen good for staves, the cypress funeral.' <sup>1</sup>

Artificial flowers look pretty in a lady's head-dress ; but they will not do to stick into lofty verse. On the contrary, a crocus bursting out of the ground seems to blush with its own golden light—' a thing of life.' So a greater authority than Lord Byron has given his testimony on this subject : ' Behold the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin ; yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' Shakspeare speaks of—

—' Daffodils,  
That come before the swallow dares and take  
The winds of March with beauty.'

All this play of fancy and dramatic interest could not be transferred to a description of hot-house plants, regulated by a thermometer. Lord Byron unfairly enlists into the service of his argument those artificial objects, which are direct imitations of nature, such as statuary, &c. This is an oversight. At this rate, all poetry would

<sup>1</sup> Most people have felt the *ennui* of being detained under a gateway in a shower of rain. Happy is he who has an umbrella, and can escape when the first fury of the storm has abated. Turn this gateway into a broker's shop, full of second-hand furniture—tables, chairs, bedsteads, bolsters, and all the accommodations of man's life,—the case will not be mended. On the other hand, convert it into a wild natural cave, and we may idle away whole hours in it, marking a streak in the rock, or a flower that grows on the sides, without feeling time hang heavy on us. The reason is, that where we are surrounded with the works of man—the sympathy with the art and purposes of man, as it were, irritates our own will, and makes us impatient of whatever interferes with it : while, on the contrary, the presence of nature, of objects existing without our intervention and controul, disarms the will of its restless activity, and disposes us to submit to accidents that we cannot help, and the course of outward events, without repining. We are thrown into the hands of nature, and become converts to her power. Thus the idea of the artificial, the conventional, the voluntary, is fatal to the romantic and imaginary. To us it seems, that the free spirit of nature rushes through the soul, like a stream with a murmuring sound, the echo of which is poetry.

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be artificial poetry. Dr. Darwin is among those, who have endeavoured to confound the distinctions of natural and artificial poetry, and indeed he is, perhaps, the only one who has gone the whole length of Lord Byron's hypercritical and super-artificial theory. Here are some of his lines, which have been greatly admired.

### *Apostrophe to Steel.*

' Hail, adamantine steel ! magnetic lord,  
King of the prow, the ploughshare, and the sword !  
True to the pole, by thee the pilot guides  
His steady course amid the struggling tides,  
Braves with broad sail the immeasurable sea,  
Cleaves the dark air, and asks no star but thee ! '

This is the true false gallop of the sublime. Yet steel is a very useful metal, and doubtless performs all these wonders. But it has not, among so many others, the virtue of amalgamating with the imagination. We might quote also his description of the spinning-jenny, which is pronounced by Dr. Aikin to be as ingenious a piece of mechanism as the object it describes ; and, according to Lord Byron, this last is as well suited to the manufacture of verses as of cotton-twist without end.

3. Natural interests are those which are real and inevitable, and are so far contradistinguished from the artificial, which are factitious and affected. If Lord Byron cannot understand the difference, he may find it explained by contrasting some of Chaucer's characters and incidents with those in the Rape of the Lock, for instance. Custance floating in her boat on the wide sea, is different from Pope's heroine,

' Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.'

Griselda's loss of her children, one by one, of her *all*, does not belong to the same class of incidents, nor of subjects for poetry, as Belinda's loss of her favourite curl. A sentiment that has rooted itself in the heart, and can only be torn from it with life, is not like the caprice of the moment—the putting on of paint and patches, or the pulling off a glove. The inbred character is not like a masquerade dress. There is a difference between the theatrical, and natural, which is important to the determination of the present question, and which has been overlooked by his Lordship. Mr. Bowles, however, formally insists (and with the best right in the world) on the distinction between passion and manners. But he agrees with Lord Byron, that the Epistle to Abelard is the height of the pathetic.

' Strange that such difference should be  
Twixt tweedledum and tweedledee.'



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That it is in a great degree pathetic, we should be amongst the last to dispute; but its character is more properly rhetorical and voluptuous. That its interest is of the highest or deepest order, is what we should wonder to hear any one affirm, who is intimate with Shakspeare, Chaucer, Boccaccio, our own early dramatists, or the Greek tragedians. There is more true, unfeigned, unspeakable, heartfelt distress in one line of Chaucer's tale just mentioned,

'Let me not like a worm go by the way,'

than in all Pope's writings put together; and we say it without any disrespect to him too. Didactic poetry has to do with manners, as they are regulated, not by fashion or caprice, but by abstract reason and grave opinion, and is equally remote from the dramatic, which describes the involuntary and unpremeditated impulses of nature. As Lord Byron refers to the Bible, we would just ask him here, which he thinks the most poetical parts of it, the Law of the Twelve Tables, the Book of Leviticus, &c.; or the Book of Job, Jacob's dream, the story of Ruth, &c.?

4. Supernatural poetry is, in the sense here insisted on, allied to nature, not to art, because it relates to the impressions made upon the mind by unknown objects and powers, out of the reach both of the cognizance and will of man, and still more able to startle and confound his imagination, while he supposes them to exist, than either those of nature or art. The Witches in Macbeth, the Furies in Æschylus, are so far artificial objects, that they are creatures of the poet's brain; but their impression on the mind depends on their possessing attributes, which baffle and set at nought all human pretence, and laugh at all human efforts to tamper with them. Satan in Milton is an artificial or ideal character: but would any one call this artificial poetry? It is, in Lord Byron's phrase, super-artificial, as well as super-human poetry. But it is serious business. Fate, if not Nature, is its ruling genius. The Pandemonium is not a baby-house of the fancy, and it is ranked (ordinarily,) with natural, *i.e.* with the highest and most important order of poetry, and above the Rape of the Lock. We intended a definition, and have run again into examples. Lord Byron's *concretions* have spoiled us for philosophy. We will therefore leave off here, and conclude with a character of Pope, which seems to have been written with an eye to this question, and which (for what we know) is as near a solution of it as the Noble Letter-writer's emphatical division of Pope's writings into ethical, mock-heroic, and fanciful poetry.

'Pope was not assuredly a poet of this class, or in the first rank of it. He saw nature only dressed by art; he judged of beauty by

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fashion; he sought for truth in the opinions of the world; he judged of the feelings of others by his own. The capacious soul of Shakspeare had an intuitive and mighty sympathy with whatever could enter into the heart of man in all possible circumstances: Pope had an exact knowledge of all that he himself loved or hated, wished or wanted. Milton has winged his daring flight from heaven to earth, through Chaos and old Night. Pope's Muse never wandered with safety, but from his library to his grotto, or from his grotto into his library back again. His mind dwelt with greater pleasure on his own garden, than on the garden of Eden; he could describe the faultless whole-length mirror that reflected his own person, better than the smooth surface of the lake that reflects the face of heaven—a piece of cut glass or a pair of paste buckles with more brilliance and effect, than a thousand dew-drops glittering in the sun. He would be more delighted with a patent lamp, than with “the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow,” that fills the skies with its soft silent lustre, that trembles through the cottage window, and cheers the watchful mariner on the lonely wave. In short, he was the poet of personality and of polished life. That which was nearest to him, was the greatest; the fashion of the day bore sway in his mind over the immutable laws of nature. He preferred the artificial to the natural in external objects, because he had a stronger fellow-feeling with the self-love of the maker or proprietor of a gewgaw, than admiration of that which was interesting to all mankind. He preferred the artificial to the natural in passion, because the involuntary and uncalculating impulses of the one hurried him away with a force and vehemence with which he could not grapple; while he could trifle with the conventional and superficial modifications of mere sentiment at will, laugh at or admire, put them on or off like a masquerade-dress, make much or little of them, indulge them for a longer or a shorter time, as he pleased; and because while they amused his fancy and exercised his ingenuity, they never once disturbed his vanity, his levity, or indifference. His mind was the antithesis of strength and grandeur; its power was the power of indifference. He had none of the enthusiasm of poetry; he was in poetry what the sceptic is in religion.

‘It cannot be denied, that his chief excellence lay more in diminishing, than in aggrandizing objects; in checking, not in encouraging our enthusiasm; in sneering at the extravagances of fancy or passion, instead of giving a loose to them; in describing a row of pins and needles, rather than the embattled spears of Greeks and Trojans; in penning a lampoon or a compliment, and in praising Martha Blount.

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‘Shakspeare says,

“ — In Fortune’s ray and brightness  
The herd hath more annoyance by the brize  
Than by the tyger : but when the splitting wind  
Makes flexible the knees of knotted oaks,  
And flies fled under shade, why then  
The thing of courage,  
As roused with rage, with rage doth sympathise;  
And with an accent tuned in the self-same key,  
Replies to chiding Fortune.”

There is none of this rough work in Pope. His Muse was on a peace-establishment, and grew somewhat effeminate by long ease and indulgence. He lived in the smiles of fortune, and basked in the favour of the great. In his smooth and polished verse we meet with no prodigies of nature, but with miracles of wit; the thunders of his pen are whispered flatteries; its forked lightnings pointed sarcasms; for—“the gnarled oak,” he gives us “the soft myrtle:” for rocks, and seas, and mountains, artificial grass-plats, gravel-walks, and tinkling rills; for earthquakes and tempests, the breaking of a flower-pot, or the fall of a china jar; for the tug and war of the elements, or the deadly strife of the passions, we have

“Calm contemplation and poetic ease.”

Yet within this retired and narrow circle how much, and that how exquisite, was contained! What discrimination, what wit, what delicacy, what fancy, what lurking spleen, what elegance of thought, what pampered refinement of sentiment! It is like looking at the world through a microscope, where every thing assumes a new character and a new consequence, where things are seen in their minutest circumstances and slightest shades of difference; where the little becomes gigantic, the deformed beautiful, and the beautiful deformed. The wrong end of the magnifier is, to be sure, held to everything, but still the exhibition is highly curious, and we know not whether to be most pleased or surprised. Such, at least, is the best account I am able to give of this extraordinary man, without doing injustice to him or others.’

## THE PIRATE

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*The London Magazine.*

*January 1822.*

THIS is not the best, nor is it the worst (the worst is good enough for us) of the Scotch Novels. There is a story in it, an interest excited almost from the first, a clue which you get hold of and wish to follow out; a mystery to be developed, and which does not disappoint you at last. After you once get into the stream, you read on with eagerness, and have only to complain of the number of impediments and diversions thrown in your way. The author is evidently writing to gain time, to make up his complement of volumes, his six thousand guineas worth of matter; and to get to the end of your journey, and satisfy the curiosity he has raised, you must be content to travel with him, stop when he stops, and turn out of the road as often as he pleases. He dallies with your impatience, and smiles in your face, but you cannot, and dare not be angry with him, while with his giant-hand he plays at pushpin with the reader, and sweeps the rich stakes from the table. He has, they say, got a *plum* by his writings. What have not the public got by reading them? The course of exchange is, and will be, in our favour, as long as he gives us one volume for ourselves, and two for himself. Who is there that has not been the better, the wiser, and happier man for these fine and inexhaustible productions of genius? The more striking characters and situations are not quite so highly wrought up in the present, as in some former instances, nor are they so crowded, so thickly sown. But the genius of the author is not exhausted, nor can it be so till not a Scotch superstition, or popular tradition is left, or till the pen drops lifeless and regretted from its master's hand. Ah! who will then call the mist from its hill? Who will make the circling eddies roar? Who, with his 'so potent art,' will dim the sun, or stop the winds, that wave the forest-heads, in their course? Who will summon the spirits of the northern air from their chill abodes, or make gleaming lake or hidden cavern teem with wizard, or with elfin forms? There is no one but the Scottish Prospero, but old Sir Walter, can do the trick aright. He is the very genius of the clime—mounts in her old grey clouds, dips in her *usquebaugh* and whiskey!—startles you with her antique Druid spells in the person of Elshie, or stirs up the fierce heat of her theological fires with Macbriar and Kettle-drumle: sweeps the country with a far war-cry to Lochiel, or sighs out the soul of love

<sup>1</sup> The Pirate, by the author of 'Waverley, Kenilworth,' &c. Archibald Constable and Co., Edinburgh.

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in the perfumed breath of the Lily of St. Leonard's. Stand thou, then, Meg Merrilees, on the point of thy fated rock, with wild locks and words streaming to the wind; and sit thou there in thy narrow recess, Balfour of Burley, betwixt thy Bible and thy sword, thy arm of flesh and arm of the Spirit:—when the last words have passed the lips of the author of *Waverley*, there will be none to re-kindle your fires, or recall your spirit! Let him write on then to the last drop of ink in his ink-stand, even though it should not be made according to the model of that described by Mr. Coleridge, and we will not be afraid to read whatever he is not ashamed to publish. We are the true and liege subjects of his pen, and profess our ultra-fealty in this respect, like the old French leaguers, with a *Quand même*.

The Pirate is not what we expected, nor is it new. We had looked for a prodigious *row*—landing and boarding, cut and thrust, blowing up of ships, and sacking of sea-ports, with the very devil to pay, and a noise to deafen clamour,

‘Guns, drums, trumpets, blunderbusses and thunder.’

We supposed that for the time ‘Hell itself would be empty, and all the devils be here.’ *There be land pirates and water pirates*; and we thought Sir Walter would be for kicking up just such a dust by sea, in the Buccaneers, (as it was to be called) as he has done by land in Old Mortality. *Multum abludit imago*. There is nothing or little of the sort. There is here (bating a sprinkling of twenty pages of roaring lads, who come on shore for no use but to get themselves hanged in the Orkneys,) only a single Pirate, a peaking sort of gentleman, spiteful, but not enterprising; in love, and inclined to take up and reform, but very equivocal in the sentiments he professes, and in those he inspires in others. Cleveland is the Pirate, who is wrecked off the coast of Zetland, is saved from destruction by young Mordaunt Mertoun, who had been so far the hero of the piece, and jilts him with his mistress, Minna, a grave sentimentalist, and the elder of two sisters, to whom Mordaunt had felt a secret and undeclared passion. The interest of the novel hinges on this *bizarre* situation of the different parties. Sir Walter (for he has in the present work leisure on his hands to philosophize) here introduces a dissertation of some length, but not much depth, to show that the jilting of favoured, or half-favoured lovers, comes by the dispensation of Providence, and that the breed of honest men and bonny lasses would be spoiled if the fairest of the fair, the sentimental Miss, and the prude (contrary to all previous and common-place calculation), did not prefer the black-guard and the bravo, to the tender, meek, puny, unpretending, heart-

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broken lover. We do not think our novelist manages his argument well, or shines in his new Professor's chair of morality. Miss Polly Peachum, we do indeed remember, the artless, soft, innocent Polly, fell in love with the bold Captain Macheath; but so did Miss Lucy Lockitt too, who was no chicken, and who, according to this new balance of power in the empire of love, ought to have tempered her fires with the phlegm of some young chaplain to the prison, or the soft insinuations of some dreaming poet. But as our author himself is not in a hurry to get on with his story, we will imitate him, and let him speak here in his superfluous character of a casuist, or commentator on his own narrative.

‘Captain Cleveland sate betwixt the sisters, was sedulous in his attentions to both, and Mordaunt was so placed, that he could observe all, and hear a great deal, of what passed between them. But Cleveland's peculiar regard seemed devoted to the elder sister. Of this the younger was perhaps conscious, for more than once her eye glanced towards Mordaunt, and, as he thought, with something in it which resembled regret for the interruption of their intercourse, and a sad remembrance of former and more friendly times; while Minna was exclusively engrossed by the attentions of her neighbour; and that it should be so, filled Mordaunt with surprise and resentment.

‘Minna, the serious, the prudent, the reserved, whose countenance and manners indicated so much elevation of character—Minna, the lover of solitude, and of those paths of knowledge in which men walk best without company—the enemy of light mirth, the friend of musing melancholy, and the frequenter of fountain-heads and pathless glens—she whose character seemed, in short, the very reverse of that which might be captivated by the bold, coarse, and daring gallantry of such a man as this Captain Cleveland, gave, nevertheless, her eye and ear to him, as he sat beside her at the table, with an interest and a graciousness of attention, which, to Mordaunt, who well knew how to judge of her feelings by her manner, intimated a degree of the highest favour. He observed this, and his heart rose against the favourite by whom he had been thus superseded, as well as against Minna's indiscreet departure from her own character.

“‘What is there about the man,” he said within himself, “more than the bold and daring assumption of importance which is derived from success in petty enterprises, and the exercise of petty despotism over a ship's crew?—His very language is more professional than is used by the superior officers of the British navy; and the wit which has excited so many smiles, seems to me such as Minna would not formerly have endured for an instant. Even Brenda seems less taken with his gallantry than Minna, whom it should have suited so little.”

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‘Mordaunt was doubly mistaken in these his angry speculations. In the first place, with an eye which was, in some respects, that of a rival, he criticised far too severely the manners and behaviour of Captain Cleveland. They were unpolished, certainly; which was of the less consequence in a country inhabited by so plain and simple a race as the ancient Zetlanders. On the other hand, there was an open, naval frankness in Cleveland’s bearing—much natural shrewdness—some appropriate humour—an undoubting confidence in himself—and that enterprising hardihood of disposition, which, without any other recommendable quality, very often leads to success with the fair sex. But Mordaunt was farther mistaken in supposing that Cleveland was likely to be disagreeable to Minna Troil on account of the opposition of their characters in so many material particulars. Had his knowledge of the world been a little more extensive, he might have observed, that as unions are often formed betwixt couples differing in complexion and stature, they take place still more frequently betwixt persons totally differing in feelings, in taste, in pursuits, and in understanding; and it would not be saying, perhaps, too much, to aver that two-thirds of the marriages around us have been contracted betwixt persons who, judging *a priori*, we should have thought had scarce any charms for each other.

‘A moral and primary cause might be easily assigned for these anomalies, in the wise dispensations of Providence, that the general balance of wit, wisdom, and amiable qualities of all kinds, should be kept up through society at large. For, what a world were it, if the wise were to intermarry only with the wise, the learned with the learned, the amiable with the amiable, nay, even the handsome with the handsome? and, is it not evident, that the degraded castes of the foolish, the ignorant, the brutal, and the deformed (comprehending, by the way, far the greater portion of mankind), must, when condemned to exclusive intercourse with each other, become gradually as much brutalised in person and disposition as so many ourang-outangs? When, therefore, we see the “gentle joined to the rude,” we may lament the fate of the suffering individual, but we must not the less admire the mysterious disposition of that wise Providence which thus balances the moral good and evil of life;—which secures for a family, unhappy in the dispositions of one parent, a share of better and sweeter blood, transmitted from the other, and preserves to the offspring the affectionate care and protection of at least one of those from whom it is naturally due. Without the frequent occurrence of such alliances and unions—mis-sorted as they seem at first sight—the world could not be that for which Eternal Wisdom has designed it—a place of mixed good and evil—a place of trial at once, and of suffering, where even the

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worst ills are checkered with something that renders them tolerable to humble and patient minds, and where the best blessings carry with them a necessary alloy of embittering depreciation.

‘When, indeed, we look a little closer on the causes of those unexpected and ill-suited attachments, we have occasion to acknowledge, that the means by which they are produced do not infer that complete departure from, or inconsistency with, the character of the parties, which we might expect when the result alone is contemplated. These wise purposes which Providence appears to have had in view, by permitting such intermixture of dispositions, tempers, and understandings, in the married state, are not accomplished by any mysterious impulse by which, in contradiction to the ordinary laws of nature, men or women are urged to an union with those whom the world see to be unsuitable to them. The freedom of will is permitted to us in the occurrences of ordinary life, as in our moral conduct; and in the former as well as the latter case, is often the means of misguiding those who possess it. Thus it usually happens, more especially to the enthusiastic and imaginative, that, having formed a picture of admiration in their own mind, they too often deceive themselves by some faint resemblance in some existing being, whom their fancy, as speedily as gratuitously, invests with all the attributes necessary to complete the *beau ideal* of mental perfection. No one, perhaps, even in the happiest marriage, with an object really beloved, ever discovered by experience all the qualities he expected to possess; but in far too many cases, he finds he has practised a much higher degree of mental deception, and has erected his airy castle of felicity, upon some rainbow, which owed its very existence only to the peculiar state of the atmosphere.

‘Thus, Mordaunt, if better acquainted with life, and with the course of human things, would have been little surprised that such a man as Cleveland, handsome, bold, and animated,—a man who had obviously lived in danger, and who spoke of it as sport, should have been invested, by a girl of Minna’s fanciful disposition, with an extensive share of those qualities, which, in her active imagination, were held to fill up the accomplishments of a heroic character. The plain bluntness of his manner, if remote from courtesy, appeared at least as widely different from deceit; and, unfashioned as he seemed by forms, he had enough both of natural sense, and natural good-breeding, to support the delusion he had created, at least as far as externals were concerned. It is scarce necessary to add, that these observations apply exclusively to what are called love-matches; for when either party fix their attachment upon the substantial comforts of a rental, or a jointure, they cannot be disappointed in the acquisition, although



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they may be cruelly so in their over-estimation of the happiness it was to afford, or in having too slightly anticipated the disadvantages with which it was to be attended.

‘Having a certain partiality for the dark Beauty whom we have described, we have willingly dedicated this digression, in order to account for a line of conduct which we allow to seem absolutely unnatural in such a narrative as the present, though the most common event in ordinary life; namely, in Minna’s appearing to have over-estimated the taste, talent, and ability of a handsome young man, who was dedicating to her his whole time and attention, and whose homage rendered her the envy of almost all the other young women of that numerous party. Perhaps, if our fair readers will take the trouble to consult their own bosoms, they will be disposed to allow, that the distinguished good taste exhibited by any individual, who, when his attentions would be agreeable to a whole circle of rivals, selects *one* as their individual object, entitles him, on the footing of reciprocity, if on no other, to a large share of that individual’s favourable, and even partial, esteem. At any rate, if the character shall, after all, be deemed inconsistent and unnatural, it concerns not us, who record the facts as we find them, and pretend no privilege for bringing closer to nature those incidents which may seem to diverge from it; or for reducing to consistence that most inconsistent of all created things—the heart of a beautiful and admired female.’

Suffice it to say, that we differ from this solution of the difficulty, ingenious and old as it is; and to justify that opinion, ask only whether such a man as Cleveland would not be a general favourite with women, instead of being so merely with those of a particularly retired and fantastic character, which destroys the author’s balance of qualities in love? Indeed, his own story is a very bad illustration of his doctrine; for this romantic and imprudent attachment of the gentle and sensitive Minna to the bold and profligate Captain Cleveland leads to nothing but the most disastrous consequences; and the opposition between their sentiments and characters, which was to make them fit partners for life, only prevents the possibility of their union, and renders both parties permanently miserable. Besides, the whole perplexity is, after all, gratuitous. The enmity between Cleveland and young Mertoun (the chief subject of the plot) is founded on their jealousy of each other in regard to Minna, and yet there had been no positive engagement between her and Mertoun, who, like Edmund in *Lear*, is equally betrothed to both sisters—in the end marrying the one that he as well as the reader likes least. Afterwards, when the real character of this gay rover of the seas is more fully developed, and he gets into scrapes with the police of Orkney, the grave, romantic Minna, like a

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true northern lass, deserts him, and plays off a little old-fashioned, unavailing, but discreet morality upon him. When the reader begins to sympathise with 'a brave man in distress,' then is the time for his mistress with 'the pale face and raven locks' to look to her own character. We like the theory of the Beggar's Opera better than this: the ladies there followed their supposed hero, their *beau ideal* of a lover, to prison, instead of leaving him to his untoward fate. Minna is no NUT-BROWN MAID, though she has a passion for outlaws, between whose minds and those of the graver and more reflecting of the fair sex there is, according to the opinion of our GREAT UNKNOWN, a secret and pre-established harmony. What is still more extraordinary and unsatisfactory in the progress of the story is this—all the pretended preternatural influence of Norna of the Fitful-Head, the most potent and impressive personage in the drama, is exerted to defeat Cleveland's views, and to give Minna to Mordaunt Mertoun, for whom she conceives an instinctive and anxious attachment as her long-lost son; and yet in the end the whole force of this delusion, and the reader's sympathies, are destroyed by the discovery that Cleveland, not Mertoun, is her real offspring, and that she had been equally led astray by her maternal affection and preternatural pretensions. Does this great writer of romances, this profound historiographer of the land of visions and of second sight, thus mean to qualify his thrilling mysteries—to *back* out of his thrice-hallowed prejudices, and to turn the tables upon us with modern cant and philosophic scepticism? That is the last thing we could forgive him!

We have said that the characters in the Pirate are not altogether new. Norna, the enchantress, whom is he 'so fond' at last to depose from her *ideal* cloudy throne of spells and mystic power, is the Meg Merrilies of the scene. She passes over it with vast strides, is at hand whenever she is wanted, sits hatching fate on the topmost tower that overlooks the wilderness of waves, or glides suddenly from a subterraneous passage, and in either case moulds the elements of nature, and the unruly passions of men, to her purposes. She has 'strange power of speech,' weaves events with words, is present wherever she pleases, and performs what she wills, and yet she doubts her own power, and criticises her own pretensions. Meg Merrilies was an honest witch. She at least stuck true to herself. We hate anything by halves; and most of all, imagination and superstition piece-meal. Cleveland, again, is a sort of inferior *Gentle Geordie*, and Minna lags after Effie Deans, the victim of misplaced affection, but far, far behind. Wert thou to live a thousand years, and write a thousand romances, thou wouldst never, old True-penny, beat thy own *Heart of Mid Lothian*! It is for that we can forgive thee all

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that thou didst mean to write in the BEACON, or hast written elsewhere, beneath the dignity of thy genius and knowledge of man's weaknesses, as well as better nature! Magnus Troil is a great name, a striking name; but we *ken* his person before; he is of the same genealogy as the Bailie Braidwardine, and other representatives of old Scottish hospitality; the dwarf Nick Strumpfer is of a like familiar breed, only uglier and more useless than any former one: we have even traces, previous to the Pirate, of the extraordinary agriculturist and projector, Mr. Timothy Yellowley, and his sister, Miss Barbara Yellowley, with pinched nose and grey eyes; but we confess we have one individual who was before a stranger to us, at least in these parts, namely, Claud Halcro, the poet, and friend of 'Glorious John.' We do not think him in his place amidst dwarfs, witches, pirates, and *Udallers*; and his stories of the Wits' Coffee-house and Dryden's poetry are as tedious to the critical reader as they are to his Zetland patron and hearers. We might confirm this opinion by a quotation, but we should be thought too tedious. He fills up, we will venture to say, a hundred pages of the work with sheer impertinence, with *pribble prabble*. Whenever any serious matter is to be attended to, Claud Halcro pulls out his fiddle and draws the long bow, and repeats some verses of '*Glorious John*.' Bunce, the friend of Cleveland, is much better; for we can conceive how a strolling-player should turn gentleman-rover in a time of need, and the foppery and finery of the itinerant stage-hero become the quarter-deck exceedingly well. In general, however, our author's humour requires the aid of costume and dialect to set it off to advantage: his wit is Scotch, not English wit. It must have the *twang* of the uncouth pronunciation and peculiar manners of the country in it. The elder Mertoun is a striking misanthropic sketch; but it is not very well made out in what his misanthropy originates, nor to what it tends. He is merely a part of the machinery: neither is he the first gentleman in these Novels who lands without an introduction on the remote shores of Scotland, and shuts himself up (for reasons best known to himself) in inaccessible and solitary confinement. We had meant to give the outline of the story of the Pirate, but we are ill at a plot, and do not care to blunt the edge of the reader's curiosity by anticipating each particular. As far, however, as relates to the historical foundation of the narrative, the author has done it to our hands, and we give his words as they stand in the *Advertisement*.

[Nearly the whole of the Advertisement is quoted.]

Of the execution of these volumes we need hardly speak. It is inferior, but it is only inferior to some of his former works. What-

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ever he touches, we see the hand of a master. He has only to describe action, thoughts, scenes, and they everywhere speak, breathe, and live. It matters not whether it be a calm sea-shore, a mountain tempest, a drunken brawl, the 'Cathedral's choir and gloom,' the Sybil's watch-tower, or the smuggler's cave; the things are immediately there that we should see, hear, and feel. He is Nature's Secretary. He neither adds to, nor takes away from her book; and that makes him what he is, the most popular writer living. We might give various instances of his unrivalled undecaying power, but shall select only one or two with which we were most struck and delighted in the perusal. The characters of the two sisters, daughters of Magnus Troil, and the heroines of the tale, are thus beautifully drawn.

[Here follows the description of Minna and Brenda, from Chap. III.]

So much for elegant Vandyke portrait painting. Now for something of the Salvator style. Norna, the terrific and unhappy Norna, is thus finely introduced.

[The first introduction of Norna is quoted from Chap. v.]

We give one more extract in a different style; and we think the comic painting in it is little inferior to Hogarth's.

[A passage, beginning 'Now the fortunate arrival of Mordaunt,' &c. is quoted from Chap. XI.]

Shall we go on? No, but will leave the reader to revel at ease in the luxuries of feeling and description scattered through the rest of the work.

We have only time to add two remarks more, which we do not remember to have seen made. One relates to the exquisitely good-natured and liberal tone displayed in the author's quotations from living writers. He takes them every one by turns, and of all factions in poetry and politics, under his wing, and sticks a stanza from Coleridge, from Wordsworth, from Byron, from Crabbe, from Rogers, as a motto to his chapters, not jealous of their popularity, nor disdaining their obscurity. The author can hardly guess how much we like him for this. The second thing we would advert to is a fault, and a remarkable one. It is the slovenliness of the style and badness of the grammar throughout these admirable productions. Badness of the grammar! Slovenly style! What do you mean by that? Take a few instances, and we have done with the subject for ever. We give them *seriatim*, as we marked them in the margin.

'Here Magnus proceeded with great *animation*, sipping from *time to time* the half diluted spirit, which at the same *time animated* his resentment against the intruders,' etc. P. 16.

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‘In those days (for the *present* times are greatly altered for the better) the *presence* of a superior in such a situation,’ etc. P. 21.

‘The *information*, which she acquired by habits of patient attention, *were* indelibly rivetted in a naturally powerful memory.’ P. 48.

‘And I know not *whom* else are expected.’ P. 56.

‘Or perhaps be *preferred* the situation, of the house and farm which he himself was to occupy (which indeed was a tolerable one) as *preferable* to that, etc.’ P. 89.

‘The *strength* of the retiring wave proved even *stronger* than he had expected’ etc. P. 169.

But let us have done with this, and leave it to the Editor of the Quarterly Review to take up the subject as a mighty important little discovery of his own !

## PEVERIL OF THE PEAK<sup>1</sup>

*The London Magazine.*

February 1823.

THE author of Waverley is here himself again ; and it is on English ground that he has come upon his feet. Peveril of the Peak is all but equal to the best of the SCORCH NOVELS. It is no weaving up of old odds and ends ; no lazy repetition of himself at second-hand and *the worse for the wear*. Peveril is all new, good,<sup>2</sup> full of life, spirit, character, bustle, incident, and expectation ; nothing is wanting to make it quite equal to the very best of his former productions, but that it has not the same intense interest, nor the same preternatural and overpowering imagery. Fenella, a deaf and dumb dwarf, attached to the Countess of Derby, is, indeed, an exquisitely drawn character, and exerts a sort of quaint, apparently magic influence over the scene ; but her connection with it is so capricious, so ambiguous, and at last so improbable, as to produce or to leave none of those thrilling and awe-struck impressions which were so irresistibly interwoven with some former delineations of the same kind. But as a sketch, as a picture, the little fairy attendant of the Queen of Man is one of the most beautiful and interesting the author ever struck out

<sup>1</sup> Peveril of the Peak, by the Author of Waverley, Kenilworth, &c. In Four Volumes. Edinburgh. Constable, 1822.

<sup>2</sup> This, we are sorry to say, relates only to the three first volumes. The fourth is in a very mixed style indeed. It looks as if the author was tired, and got somebody to help him.

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with his enchanting and enchanted pencil. The present Novel comes the nearest to OLD MORTALITY, both in the class of subjects of which it treats, and in the indefatigable spirit and hurried movement of the execution. It differs from that noble masterpiece in this, that Sir Walter (or whoever else, in the devil's name, it is) has not infused the same depth or loftiness of sentiment into his English Roundheads and Cavaliers, as into his Scotch Covenanters and Royalists; that the characters are left more in the outlines and dead colouring; and though the incidents follow one another as rapidly, and have great variety and contrast, there is not the same accumulation of interest, the same thickening of the plot, nor the same thronging together of eager and complicated groups upon the canvas. His English imagination is not so fully peopled with character, manners, and sentiment, as his Scotch understanding is; but, by the mass, they are not 'thinly scattered to make up a show.' There is *cut and come again*. We say this the more willingly, because we were among those who conceived there was a falling off, a *running to seed*, in some of the later productions of the author. The FORTUNES OF NIGEL showed a resuscitation in his powers; that is, a disposition to take new ground, and proceed with real pains and unabated vigour; and in his Peveril, we think he has completed his victory over excusable idleness and an inexcusable disregard of reputation. He may now go on upon a fresh ease, and write ten more Novels, just as good or as bad as he pleases!

There were two things that we used to admire of old in this author, and that we have had occasion to admire anew in the present instance,—the extreme life of mind or naturalness displayed in the descriptions, and the magnanimity and freedom from bigotry and prejudice shewn in the drawing of the characters. This last quality is the more remarkable, as the reputed author is accused of being a thorough-paced partisan in his own person,—intolerant, mercenary, mean; a professed toad-eater, a sturdy hack, a pitiful retailer or suborner of infamous slanders, a literary Jack Ketch, who would greedily sacrifice any one of another way of thinking as a victim to prejudice and power, and yet would do it by other hands, rather than appear in it himself. Can this be all true of the author of Waverley; and does he deal out such fine and heaped justice to all sects and parties in time past? Perhaps (if so) one of these extremes accounts for the other; and, as 'he knows all qualities with a learned spirit,' probably he may be aware of this practical defect in himself, and be determined to shew to posterity, that when his own interest was not concerned, he was as free from that nauseous and pettifogging bigotry, as a mere matter of speculation, as any man could be. As a novel-writer, he gives the devil his due, and he gives no more to a saint. He treats human

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nature scurvily, yet handsomely; that is, much as it deserves; and, if it is the same person who is the author of the Scotch novels, and who has a secret moving hand in certain Scotch Newspapers and Magazines, we may fairly characterize him as

‘The wisest, *meanest* of mankind.’

Among other characters in the work before us, is that of Ned Christian, a cold-blooded hypocrite, pander, and intriguer; yet a man of prodigious talent,—of great versatility,—of unalterable self-possession and good-humour, and with a power to personate agreeably, and to the life, any character he pleased. Might not such a man have written the Scotch Novels?

It has been suggested, with great modesty, that the Author of Waverley was like Shakspeare. We beg leave with equal modesty to suggest another comparison, which we think much nearer the mark; and that is, to the writings of Mr. Cobbett. The peculiarity of Shakspeare’s mind is (we humbly apprehend) that sort of power which completely levels the distinction between imagination and reality. His mind properly has wings, and it is indifferent to him whether he treads the air or walks the earth. He makes us acquainted with things we did not know before, as if we knew them familiarly. Now Sir Walter Scott only recals to us what we already knew—he deals wholly in realities, or what are commonly received as such; and so does Mr. Cobbett. Both are down-right matter-of-fact minds, and have little, if any, of that power which throws into objects more than ordinary opinion or feeling connects with them. Naturalness is the *forte* of both these writers. They have a strong, vivid, bodily perception (so to speak), a material intuition of what they write about. All their ideas are concrete, and not abstracted. Mention an old, dilapidated castle, and a thriving, substantial brick mansion to Sir Walter Scott, and he immediately has an actual image of some such objects conjured up in his mind, and describes them as he has seen them, with all their local circumstances, and so as to bring back some similar recollection to the reader’s mind, as if there had been just two such buildings in the place where he was brought-up. But this revived reality is all; there is no new light thrown upon the subject. It is a sort of poetic memory. Good. So set Mr. Cobbett to work upon the subject of our agricultural distress, and with quite as much poetry, as much of the picturesque, and in as good English as Sir Walter Scott writes Scotch, he will describe you to the life a turnip-field with the green sprouts glittering in the sun, the turnips frozen to a mere clod, the breath of the oxen steaming near that are biting it, and the dumb patience of the silly sheep. We

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should like to know whether he is not as great a hand at this sort of ocular demonstration as Sir Walter himself? He shall describe a Scotch heath, or an American wilderness against Sir Walter for a thousand pounds. Then for character; who does it with more master-strokes, with richer gusto, or a greater number of palpable hits than the Editor of the Political Register? Again, as to pathos, let Mr. Cobbett tell a story of a pretty servant girl or soldier's wife, left by her sweetheart, or shot dead in his arms, and see if he will not come near the *Heart of Mid Lothian*? You may say it is not this or that, it is coarse, low, the man has no feeling, but it is nature, and that's quite enough. The truth is, these two original geniuses have found out a secret; they write as they feel. It is just like school boys being able to read as they would talk. It is a very awkward difficulty to get over, but being once accomplished, the effect is prodigious. Then, there is the same strong sarcastic vein of *royster-ing* pot-house humour in the one as in the other; and as for giving both sides of a question, nobody has done that more effectually than Mr. Cobbett in the course of his different writings. His style also is as good, nay, far better: and if it should be said that Mr. Cobbett sometimes turns blackguard, it cannot be affirmed that he is a cat's paw—which is the *dernier resort* of humanity, into which Sir Walter has retreated, and shuts himself up in it impregnably as in a fortress. To conclude this parallel, we will be bold to say in illustration of our argument, that there is hardly a single page in the Scotch Novels which Mr. Cobbett could not write, if he set his mind to it; and there is not a single page in Shakspeare, either the best or the worst, which he *could* write for his life, and let him try ever so. Such is the genius of the three men.

So much by way of preface to our account of the most magnanimous Peveril of the Peak, and now for extracts. We have not time or limits to give the story, which, however, relates to the Civil Wars of England; but we shall furnish our readers with a specimen of the spirit with which it is written; it is the description of the meeting of Peveril with the dwarf Fenella, where she tries to prevent his going to meet Alice Bridgenorth at the Goddard Crovann-stone in the Isle of Man.

[The whole of Chap. xvi. is set out.]

We have been led to such length by the beauty of this description that we have not room for another extract, or we would give that master-piece of wit and irony, the scene where Peveril meets with Ganlesse and Smith at a low alehouse, on his route through Derbyshire.



## MR. BECKFORD'S VATHEK

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*The Morning Chronicle.*

October 10, 1823.

THE Caliph Vathek is a work known to the public rather by name than by its merits, which are not only considerable but first-rate. It is a masterly performance. It has extraordinary power of thought and facility of execution. Lord Byron has borne testimony to its attractions, and indeed, it has been said that he owes his *mixed style* to it; but both are borrowed originally from Voltaire. The ironical vein of *Candide* is the common parent of both, to which Lord Byron has added the charms of verse and of pathetic description, and Mr. Beckford the imposing machinery of an ORIENTAL TALE. The style we speak of takes the misanthropic view of human nature, but it takes it with gaiety and good humour. It blends the sacred and prophane with complete indifference, and treats the most serious things with the utmost levity, we must not say with the contempt they deserve. An indignant invective is stopped short by some ludicrous incident—accumulated horrors are carried off by a play upon words. The writer proceeds through his task with perfect alacrity, with perfect equanimity, and is supposed to ‘know all qualities with a learned spirit.’ Nothing surprises—nothing shocks him; and, after working up the reader’s sympathy or abhorrence to the highest pitch, suddenly relieves him by turning the whole into a jest. A single sentence will explain what we mean. In the midst of an alarming situation, it is recorded of Vathek, that, ‘as he continued to eat, his piety increased; and in the same breath which recited his prayers, *he called for the Koran and sugar!*’ This is Voltaire all over, and quite as good. ‘The Koran and sugar’ are not things of coordinate importance; but the *moral* seems to be that to a miserable, peevish, sensual, selfish being like the Caliph, they were pretty equal.

Lord Byron is unequal, and flounders in opposite extremes; he interests his reader and forgets himself in the impassioned parts of his poetry, and then tries to make up for it by a forced and extravagant strain of mirth. But Vathek is in perfect keeping. The author is never for a moment thrown off his balance, but shows the same master-hand throughout. Whatever is the subject, he himself is quite at his ease, and unconcerned; he sets himself in motion, but is not at all affected by its unaccountable vicissitudes. He is the very genius of misanthropy, or rather of callous indifference to moral good and evil; never was the principle of evil, the pure, defecated, remorseless

<sup>1</sup> The History of the Caliph Vathek. 1786.

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love of mischief and power in the human mind more finely portrayed than it is here. It is not passion, provoked by wrongs, and stung to madness; it is wanton, cold-blooded, inveterate malignity, reckless of consequences, regardless of motives or object. Vathek breathes the spirit of disinterested, flagitious delight in the abuse of power; and shows the abstract workings of this principle in the human breast, and more particularly in the breast of Kings, in a very edifying point of view. The Caliph and his mother are a fine pair. The Sultan himself is an imperfect specimen of this inverted morality and imperial virtue: he is the occasional slave of indolence, has his misgivings of conscience, and wanderings of imagination; but she is true as touch, and as queen-mother, makes up for her limited power by her unlimited will to inflict misery, and to instigate others to crime. Her delight is the taste of poisons, in the touch of toads and adders, in the mowing and chattering of apes, in the vapours of charnel houses, in scorching suns, in sleepless journeys, in the aspect of the Great Desert, in thrones and palaces of fire. Nothing disturbs her undaunted soul, or puts a stop to her pride, cruelty, and ambition. Evil, which is at first a means, becomes an end, till at last the mind reposes only on pain, on torture, and on 'restless ecstasy.' The contempt shewn for human nature and human suffering by unbridled power is a fine lesson, for it steels the heart against it, and explains how the same spirit is unavoidably at work wherever one human being is allowed to trample on others with impunity, and laugh at their complaints. Before setting out to join her son in the regions of bliss, the royal mother, having (as she thinks) no further occasion for it, sets fire to the tower eleven thousand steps high which the Caliph had built, burns her Mutes and Negresses (her prime favourites and instruments of mischief) in it; but first of all, makes them bury the Caliph's wives and mistresses alive, which, she says, was some consolation to them. When she gets to the infernal regions, this termagant wants to dethrone one of the Solymans, that she may usurp his place.

We hardly know what passage to select where all sparkles and stings: we thought at first of giving the journey of Vathek across the Desert, which is full of ludicrous and horrible accidents, but we shall fix on the expedition of Carathis, the account of which is as cool as a draught of aconitum, and the spirit almost as deadly.

'No person knew aught of Vathek, and a thousand ridiculous stories were propagated at his expense. The eagerness of Carathis may be easily guessed at receiving the letter, as well as her rage at reading the dissolute conduct of her son.

'"Is it so?" said she; "either I will perish, or Vathek shall enter the palace of fire. Let me expire in flames, provided he may reign

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on the throne of Soliman!" Having said this, and whirled herself round in a magical manner, which struck Morakanabad with such terror as caused him to recoil, she ordered her great camel Alboufaki to be brought, and the hideous Nerkes with the unrelenting Cafour to attend.

"I require no other retinue," said she to Morakanabad; "I am going on affairs of emergency, a truce therefore to parade! Take you care of the people, fleece them well in my absence; for we shall expend large sums, and one knows not what may betide."

The night was uncommonly dark, and a pestilential blast ravaged the plain of Catoul that would have deterred any other traveller, however urgent the call; but Carathis enjoyed most whatever filled others with dread. Nerkes concurred in opinion with her, and Cafour had a particular predilection for a pestilence. In the morning this accomplished caravan, with the wood-fellers who directed their route, halted on the edge of an extensive marsh, whence so noxious a vapour arose as would have destroyed any animal but Alboufaki, who naturally inhaled these malignant fogs. The peasants entreated their convoy not to sleep in this place.

"To sleep," cried Carathis, "what an excellent thought! I never sleep but for visions; and, as to my attendants, their occupations are too many to close the only eye they each have."

The poor peasants, who were not over-pleased with their party, remained open-mouthed with surprise.

Carathis alighted as well as her Negresses, and severally stripping off their outer garments they all ran in their drawers, to cull from those spots where the sun shone fiercest the venomous plants that grew on the marsh. This provision was made for the family of the Emir, and whoever might retard the expedition to Istakar. The woodmen were overcome with fear when they beheld these three horrible phantoms run, and, not much relishing the company of Alboufaki, stood aghast at the command of Carathis to set forward, notwithstanding it was noon, and the heat fierce enough to calcine even rocks. In spite, however, of every remonstrance, they were forced implicitly to submit.

Alboufaki, who delighted in solitude, constantly snorted whenever he perceived himself near a habitation; and Carathis, who was apt to spoil him with indulgence, as constantly turned him aside, so that the peasants were precluded from procuring subsistence, for the milch goats and ewes, which Providence had sent towards the district they traversed to refresh travellers with their milk, all fled at the sight of the hideous animal and his strange riders. As to Carathis, she needed no common aliment, for her invention had previously furnished her

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with an opiate to stay her stomach, some of which she imparted to her mutes.

'At the fall of night Alboufaki, making a sudden stop, stamped with his foot, which to Carathis, who understood his paces, was a certain indication that she was near the confines of some cemetery. The moon shed a bright light on the spot, which served to discover a long wall, with a large door in it standing ajar, and so high that Alboufaki might easily enter. The miserable guides, who perceived their end approaching, humbly implored Carathis, as she had now so good an opportunity, to inter them, and immediately gave up the ghost. Nerkes and Cafour, whose wit was of a style peculiar to themselves, were by no means parsimonious of it on the folly of these poor people, nor could anything have been found more suited to their tastes than the site of the burying-ground and the sepulchres which its precincts contained. There were at least two thousand of them on the declivity of a hill—some in the form of pyramids, others like columns, and, in short, the variety of their shapes was endless. Carathis was too much immersed in her sublime contemplations to stop at the view, charming as it appeared in her eyes. Pondering the advantages that might accrue from her present situation, she could not forbear to exclaim :

"So beautiful a cemetery must be haunted by Ghouls! and they want not for intelligence. Having heedlessly suffered my guides to expire, I will apply for directions to them, and as an inducement will invite them to regale on these fresh corpses."

'After this short soliloquy she beckoned to Nerkes and Cafour, and made signs with her fingers, as much as to say :

"Go, knock against the sides of the tombs, and strike up your delightful warblings, that are so like to those of the guests whose company I wish to obtain."

'The Negresses full of joy at the behests of their Mistress, and promising themselves much pleasure from the society of the Ghouls, went with an air of conquest, and began their knockings at the tombs. As their strokes were repeated, a hollow noise was heard in the earth; the surface hove up into heaps, and the Ghouls, on all sides, protruded their noses to inhale the effluvia, which the carcasses of the woodmen began to emit.

'They assembled before a sarcophagus of white marble, where Carathis was seated between the bodies of her miserable guides. The Princess received her visitants with distinguished politeness, and, when supper was ended, proceeded with them to business. Having soon learned from them everything she wished to discover, it was her intention to set forward forthwith on her journey, but her Negresses, who were forming tender connections with the Ghouls, importuned

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her with all their fingers to wait at least till the dawn. Carathis, however, being chastity in the abstract, and an implacable enemy to love and repose, at once rejected their prayer, mounted Alboufaki, and commanded them to take their seats in a moment. Four days and four nights she continued her route, without turning to the right hand or left; on the fifth she traversed the mountains and half-burnt forests, and arrived on the sixth before the beautiful screens which concealed from all eyes the voluptuous wanderings of her son.'

We had intended to break off here, but we cannot help going on.

'It was daybreak, and the guards were snoring on their posts in careless security, when the rough trot of Alboufaki awoke them in consternation. Imagining that a group of spectres ascending from the abyss was approaching, they all without ceremony took to their heels. Vathek was at that instant with Nouronihar in the bath, hearing tales and laughing at Bababalouk who related them; but no sooner did the outcry of his guards reach him than he flounced from the water like a carp, and as soon threw himself back at the sight of Carathis, who, advancing with her Negresses upon Alboufaki, broke through the muslin awnings and veils of the pavilion. At this sudden apparition Nouronihar (for she was not at all times free from remorse) fancied that the moment of celestial vengeance was come, and clung about the Caliph in amorous despondence.

'Carathis, still seated on her camel, foamed with indignation at the spectacle which obtruded itself on her chaste view. She thundered forth without check or mercy:

"Thou double-headed and four-legged monster! what means all this winding and writhing? Art thou not ashamed to be seen grasping this limber sapling, in preference to the sceptre of the pre-Adamite Sultans? Is it then for this paltry doxy that thou hast violated the conditions in the parchment of our Giaour? Is it on her thou hast lavished thy precious moments? Is this the fruit of the knowledge I have taught thee? Is this the end of thy journey? Tear thyself from the arms of this little simpleton, drown her in the water before me, and instantly follow my guidance."

'In the first ebullition of his fury Vathek resolved to make a skeleton of Alboufaki and to stuff the skins of Carathis and her blacks; but the ideas of the Giaour, the palace of Istakar, the sabres and the talismans, flashing before his imagination with the simultaneousness of lightning, he became more moderate, and said to his mother, in a civil but decisive tone:

"Dread lady! you shall be obeyed, but I will not drown Nouronihar; she is sweeter to me than a Myrabolan comfit, and is

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enamoured of carbuncles, especially that of Giamschid, which hath also been promised to be conferred upon her; she, therefore, shall go along with us, for I intend to repose with her beneath the canopies of Soliman. I can sleep no more without her."

"Be it so!" replied Carathis, alighting, and at the same time committing Alboufaki to the charge of her women.

Nouronihar, who had not yet quitted her hold, began to take courage, and said with an accent of fondness to the Caliph:

"Dear Sovereign of my soul! I will follow thee, if it be thy will, beyond the Kaf in the land of the Afrits. I will not hesitate to climb for thee the nest of the Simurgh, who, this lady excepted, is the most awful of created existences."

This stile, to use an expression of the Author, is 'tolerably venomous'; it is a strong tonic! It confirms and hardens our convictions on the subject of right and wrong, by seeing the contempt with which they are treated (if it were only from the spirit of contradiction) and braces our resolution in favour of virtue by the example of vice. If it be true, that

'Vice, to be hated, needs but to be seen,'

the world are much obliged to the author of Vathek. By the nakedness of the profession, and the cool effrontery of the practice of it here, there can be no mistake left upon the subject. We take the virtuous side in self-defence, and are insulted into a sense of humanity. There are but two principles to chuse between—good and evil. 'The rest returns to laughter.' We meet with no whining morality, no blustering mock heroics in praise of liberty; but the slave has his loyalty thrown stifling back in his face, the voluptuary is shamed out of his puny, mawkish pretensions to profligacy! In a word, Vathek is 'a good piece of work,' and deserving alike of the attention of the poet and the philosopher. The romantic and luxuriant oriental description in this volume are glittering, florid, and effeminate, rather than voluptuous; they are on the surface, and do not pierce to the marrow. A beautiful complexion is said by the Author to be 'fairer than the enamel of Franguestan,' which is an anti-climax, and an indication of that predominant taste for China, which is 'the fatal Cleopatra, for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it!' Nouronihar is a very tantalising little personage, that one knows not what to make of: the Giaour is a comic, but rather clumsy monster. The scenes of an alluring kind at the palace of Fakreddin are not so good as the introductory interlude of Faquirs and Dervises of Santan, with their mummeries of ourang-outangs, asses, chains and vermin. Contempt is the element in which the writer moves: 'You shall

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relish him more in the Cynic than in the Epicurean.' The concluding scene, in which the Caliph and Nouronihar descend to the palace of Eblis, is striking, grand, and is the only instance of pathos in the work. The affecting description of the mournful phantoms, walking for ever about, in silent, hapless groups, and each with his right hand placed upon his heart—which is consumed with unquenchable fire—closes the volume and makes it impossible for the reader to forget it. It has been said that *INVENTION* is not the distinguishing quality of the Scotch Novels; and it has been asked, in an answer to this objection, what *Invention* is? Let Scotch critics read *Vathek*, and they will see. This work was originally written and published in French, and, it is said, deceived the French *scavans*: the only fault of the English copy is, that it sometimes reads like a translation. We cannot say whether this was intentional or not.<sup>1</sup>

### MR. LANDOR'S IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS <sup>2</sup>

*The London Weekly Review.*

June 14, 1828.

SINCE his two former volumes, Mr. Landor has not retrograded nor stood still. In this Third Series he has, we think, carried the faults and beauties of the previous ones to excess, if excess were possible either in faults or beauties. It is true, we would have as few blemishes as possible (perhaps some are necessary to take off from the insipidity of uniform excellence); but those which are inherent in a work, or in the writer's mind, should be glaring and palpable, so that we may make the separation of what is sound and unsound at once, and throw the latter from us without being tantalized, or misled by false appearances to tolerate or admire what is not entitled to a moment's patience. Mr. Landor is not certainly liable to the reproach of tampering with his readers, or keeping them in suspense. He lets them see at once the extremity of his purpose; and as his temper, his wit, his know-

<sup>1</sup> If *Vathek* is a literary curiosity, the punctuation is no less so. Is it at all characteristic of the author's mind? It is capricious, irresolute, and in a little, frittered manner, like his taste in pictures. For instance: 'They then ordered the Muezzins to call the people to prayers, both for the sake of getting them out of the way, and of endeavouring by their petitions to avert the calamity; but neither of these expedients was a whit more successful; the sight of this fatal ball was alone sufficient to draw after it every beholder. The Muezzins themselves, though they saw it but at a distance, hastened down from their minarets and mixed with the crowd, which continued to increase in so surprising a manner that scarce an inhabitant was left in Samarah, except the aged, the sick confined to their beds, and infants at the breast, whose nurses could run more nimbly without them.'—P. 34. All these trifling commas and semi-colons might be called *insect* or *butterfly pointing*.

<sup>2</sup> *Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen.* By Walter Savage Landor, Esq. Volume III. London, 1828. Colburn.

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ledge, his prejudices, or his reason, prevail by turns, he pours them all out upon the paper, naked and undisguised, without an effort or a wish to conceal or qualify anything. There is no medium in his writing or opinions; not a passage to which we do not subscribe our hearty assent, or from which we do not absolutely revolt. The author appears to us bereft of voluntary power—to exercise neither revision nor control over his thoughts; and yet he is the most wilful of mortals. His intellect is made up of passion and purpose. If a thing once strikes him, he seizes on it with unbounded eagerness, and nothing can tempt him to loose his hold; the most indifferent proposition assumes with him the shape of an inveterate dogma; if any doubt or extravagance is pointed out in it, he insists on it the more resolutely, like a man who throws himself on his adversary's sword; let an object be deformed, his disgust knows no bounds: let it be beautiful, he dwells on it with refined and studied complacency; he applies the same determination and self-will even to the spelling of a word, and would go to martyrdom sooner than he would translate the name of *Aristoteles* into the vulgar tongue; and, whether he is thorough master of a subject or quite unacquainted with it, he is equally confident, headstrong, and, we were about to add, intolerant upon it. If Mr. Landor is intimately conversant with any branch of literature or morality, the fervour of his mind, the tenaciousness of his impressions, the sturdiness of his convictions bring it out in all its force and subtlety: if he knows nothing about it beyond hearsay or prejudice, the fiery explosion of his zeal and his intense egotism throw a bridge of words over it, equally sounding, and that appears to promise as firm a footing to the credulous adventurer. Thus he speaks with classic warmth and *ideal* rapture of pictures, respecting which he is greatly to seek;—runs mad whenever Buonaparte is mentioned, whom he classes, *à la Southey*, with Caligula and Ferdinand—(no, Mr. Southey has never had the honesty to breathe a syllable, ‘prosing or versing,’ against the *Rey Netto*);—enters into the style and character of the ancient poets, bringing out their freshness and beauty, like roses newly washed in the dew;—utters sentiments of patriotism worthy, both in style and matter, of an old Greek or Roman; and draws pictures of domestic manners and the tenderest affection, that seem actually taken from ‘the red-leaved tablets of the heart.’ As the impassioned writer thinks he can never hate or love too much, so the dispassionate reader will probably repay this candour and openness with alternate feelings of impatience and delight.

Mr. Landor's conceptions are all glowing, ardent, untractable, formidable from their power or splendour. He might dream he had been delivered of a firebrand instead of a book; *Ætna* and *Vesuvius*



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glare in the margin : or his work resembles his own Fesolan hills near Florence (his favourite haunts, where wandering, his hurried steps keep time to the beatings of his heart)—volcanic structures, pointed, bare, fanciful ; with wild flowers for ornament, with castellated ruins to attract the eye of memory, with fiery furnaces of burning indignation and of enduring wrongs sleeping in their bosom, and golden seats for Truth and far-sighted Humanity crowning their tops. In a word, our heroic dictator of dialogues is an amicable incendiary, a courtly king-killer, a lofty leveller, a recluse demagogue :—turns Guy Faux's dark lantern into a kaleidoscope, and recommendations to assassinate tyrants into the posy of a ring. He gives a proxy to the ancients to represent the moderns *à son gré*. Here is a touch of his quality :—' I wonder,' says Polycrates, ' that liberty can exist in any country where there is one resolute and sagacious man.' ' And I,' says Anacreon, ' that tyranny can exist where there are two.' He has things of this sort to ' appal the guilty and make mad the free,' and, from the vineyards and olive-grounds of Tuscany, seriously proposes the establishment of a society, to be supported by the voluntary contributions of gentlemen of good fortune and liberal principles, to rid the world of those who are born only to rob it of its birthright. A very pestilent fellow, no doubt ; and the more dangerous, in any country or out of it, as he is a scholar and a ripe and good one. We hope he will not get himself a niche in the Inquisition, for the hints he gives the Holy Allies ; our present administration would hardly get him out of the towers of St. Angelo !—The bitter sarcasms or unwelcome truths he utters would hardly pass unnoticed were they not veiled in the mystery of ancient personages and allusions. This gives them an air at once startling and transient, or puzzling.

Mr. Landor's wilfulness or singularity of feeling prevent him from joining the crowd of ephemeral writers ; he is not gregarious ; and scorns alike to think or speak with the vulgar. Seeing how fast modern wits live,—how soon their reputations wear out, like the hasty shower that spangles the grass for a moment and then sinks into the ground for ever,—he keeps aloof from the vain and noisy strife, retires to the sanctuaries of ancient fame ; wraps himself in the garb and mantle of ancient genius, and, by becoming prematurely obsolete, hopes to win a reversion of immortality. He has done, with respect to the ancients, pretty nearly what Mr. Lamb has done with so much success with respect to our own elder writers—dressed up original thoughts in borrowed phrase, to draw attention and give an appearance of greater novelty. The plan has its advantages and disadvantages, though in neither writer is it to be charged to affectation, but is the result of early habit and long-cherished associations. Mr. Lamb is better

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versed in our Elizabethan literature than any black-letter critic of the day. Mr. Landor is one of the finest classical scholars, and, we understand, the best Latin poet now in Europe. One striking effect of the almost exclusive study of the ancients in the author of the *Imaginary Conversations* is, that he is debarred the use of all our hackneyed common-places; and when he is not occupied with learned words and models, is thrown back upon the closest and most minute observation of nature for his illustrations, and thus becomes himself, in the best sense, an *ancient*; for the earliest writers, having no books to refer to, were necessitated to draw their materials directly from themselves and from outward objects. Mr. Landor's style is in general remarkable for the lofty tone of the sentiments, the sounding march of his periods, and a vast quantity of new, literal, and striking metaphors: it is deformed only, where it is deformed, by personality and passion. He is Thersites and Nestor united.

There is a high-flown and half-retracted dedication to Bolivar; and the volume contains twenty dialogues between the following speakers:—

1. *Rousseau and Malesherbes*. Mild and pleasant, were it not for an outrageous note at the commencement.

2. *Don Victor Saez and El Rey Netto* (Ferdinand and his confessor). Venom, venom: the very essence of prussic acid. 'Oh for a jest to kill!' We would give something to see the marginal notes of the Poet Laureate on this dialogue.

3. *Beniowski and Aphanasia*. As sweet as the former is bitter. Mr. Landor, from the fierceness and violence of his rage against the injustice and hypocrisy, seems to subside into fond and gentle sentiments with double relish and delicacy.

4. *Romilly and Perceval*. Gentlemanly, conciliating.

5. *Joseph Scaliger and Montaigne*. Gay, familiar, characteristic.

6. *Polycrates and Anacreon*. The cloven foot peeps out here more than once: *exempli gratiâ*—'You, my dear Polycrates, who are an usurper, for which courage, prudence, affability, liberality are necessary, would surely blush to act no better or more humanely than an hereditary and established king.'

7. *Lord Coleraine, Rev. Mr. Bloomsbury, and Rev. Mr. Swan*. In Mr. Landor's worst, that is, his only bad style; a jumble of vulgar slang and philosophical mysticism. He makes a very good imitator of Terence or Plato; a very indifferent one of Foote or Tom Brown.

8. *Marcellus and Hannibal*. Here the author is himself again; but in *Conversation*

9. *Duke de Richelieu, Sir Fire Coats, and Lady Glengrin*, he makes a miserable attempt at modern wit, low life, and fashionable manners.

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This dialogue is unfortunately the longest of all, extending to 150 pages, the scene is laid on shipboard, and it very much resembles a long sea-voyage, tedious, alarming, and sickening. There are some anecdotes of Tom Paine in it, and a character given by him of *Buonaparte* that would be highly interesting, but for an air of burlesque and rhapsody that hangs over the whole. It is the worst of this assumed and fabricated style, that one never knows how much to believe of it. It requires to be melted down into *common parlance*, before one can be sure of distinguishing the gold from the brass.

10. *Tiberius and Vipsania*. So beautiful that we have reserved it as a *bon bouche* for the conclusion of this article. It is not a conversation, but a dramatic scene of the highest order of tragedy. It would translate at once into blank verse, but does not need that additional ornament.

11. *Judge Wolfgang and Henry of Melctal*. Heart-breaking, both in the incidents and expressions. Our writer's style glows among the snows, melts among the rocks of the lonely Helvetia. He takes the bleeding patriot's part, but has no sympathy with the bloodthirsty oppressor—unlike some of our pensioned sonneteers, who cant about Schill and Hoffer, but are struck dumb at the names of Francis or Ferdinand. Ours is an honest railer: he does not sell sentiment, does not traffic in indignation, does not go to market with exclamations and interjections; his rage boils over and scalds himself, having none of the crafty qualifications of the *Lake School*. He does not say to it, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther*—that is, as far as his interest, hypocrisy, and servility permit it to float him into a snug place, but not out of it again for the world.

12. *Bossuet and the Duchess de Fontanges*. Exquisite. The folly and simplicity of this young beauty are made quite charming, and expressed with a *naïveté* that Fontaine himself never surpassed.

13. *Xenophon and Cyrus the younger*. Mr. Landor is never at a loss in these classic themes. He finds or he invents. This, however, turns somewhat to the East, and wears an hieroglyphic aspect. Take the following description of a tygress.

'*Cyrus*. I have intelligence of a noble tiger, scarcely three days' hard riding from us. The peasant who found the creature shall be exalted in honour, and receive the government of a province.

'*Xenophon*. Is the beast a male or female, to the best of his knowledge?

'*Cyrus*. A female: she was giving suck to her young ones. On perceiving the countryman, she drew up her feet gently, and squared her mouth, and rounded her eyes, slumberous with content; and

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they looked, he says, like sea-grottoes, obscurely green, interminably deep, at once awakening fear and stilling and compressing it.'

Now a Scotch critic, till he knew the author, could not tell what to make of this passage—whether it was one of Keats's *cockneyisms* or a part of a Chaldee Manuscript. Those gentlemen feel in their pockets for their opinions—and very beggarly ones they are, to say no worse.

14. *Landor, English Visitor, and Florentine Visitor.* We must quote once more. Either Mr. Landor or Mr. Colburn has put his foot in it here; but we leave comments to the malicious and inquisitive.

'*Landor.* Surely no man of the most ordinary attainments has reason to despair of office, if that man possesses a lucrative and a high one, who came from Ireland half naked, and offered his services to the publisher of a periodical journal at two guineas a-week; and who hath acquired so little sense of decency in the pride of place, as to link himself with a fellow brought back in chains, out of a British colony, for embezzling and purloining money from a place of public trust. Associated with this worthy, he has instituted a journal, in defence (as he tells us) of our laws and religion.

'*English Visitor.* I know a good old woman whom he shocked in her hospitality, which at that time he found very useful, seasoning her leg of lamb and pigeon-pie with the coarsest and stalest of cider-cellar impiety. Cumberland said he was the most vulgar man in the least elegant and least decorous of nations; but that he could forgive him if he were not also the most malignant in the least spiteful. I can account for it only from the facility with which his old associates despise him, and the violent effort he makes at mutual disdain,' p. 384.

'Call you this backing of your friends,' Mr. Colburn? The *last* Series of *Sayings and Doings* indeed! What! are these things talked of on the banks of the Arno? Does the dirt of the *John Bull* find its way into classic streams? If the above account is true, we have a pretty picture of the state of English politics and literature for the year 1828. His present Majesty and Mr. Landor are at issue on one point: the former thinks Mr. Peel the vulgarest man about his person; the latter thinks Mr. C—the most inelegant in his dominion. 'Who shall decide, where judges disagree?'—In the close of this conversation the writer 'babbles of modern artists in Italy and green reputations.' We wish he would not touch upon that string: but to say to Mr. Landor, *Do not do this*, is to say to him, *Do it!*

15. *Ines de Castro, Don Pedro, and Donna Blanca*, is another fine study of tragedy. One would pronounce confidently, from perusing these scattered fragments, that Mr. Landor could write a tragedy; yet he failed in his *Count Julian*. Everyone would have supposed, from every page of his writings, that Sir Walter Scott could write a

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tragedy, till he published *Halidon Hill*. Lord Byron was urged by the Edinburgh critics to write dramas, which they afterwards agreed to damn. Mr. Barry Cornwall wrote exquisite *Dramatic Scenes*—but there is none now living that can write a whole tragedy but the author of *Virginius*, and nobody thought of his writing one. Works of genius take the world by surprise : there is no divining them beforehand !

16. *Pope Leo XII and his Valet Gigi*. This is quite in the vein of the old comedy, and not quotable, scarce readable. Mr. Landor, in passing, galls one Ahab Rigworthy, of Connecticut, by name, and the Americans in general, on the score of a want of taste for Fine Art.

17. *Epictetus and Seneca*, is fine ; but Mr. Landor does not show the same partiality to the rich philosopher as he does to his pupil, Nero. This dialogue, however, contains some of his subtlest and most pithy sentences.

18. *Peter the Great and Alexis*, is characteristic, pathetic, as good as anything in Kotzebue, with more point.

19. *Soliman and Mufti*. Daring, brilliant. For instance, Mufti thus addresses Soliman. ‘If anything, after the miracles of our Prophet, were wanting to demonstrate God’s reprobation of the unbeliever, the years of thy reign, like successive lightnings that open the heavens and strike the earth, would declare it. First, the strongest and most beautiful of European cities, Belgrade, abased her towers and threw open her gates before thy scymetar. The following year ran the swifter its celestial course, that it might behold the sunny Rhodes adorn her brow with the crescent, and the flower of Christian chivalry lie dishonoured in the dust,’ &c.

20. *Demosthenes and Eubulides*, is the last, and as a dialogue, perhaps the finest. What shall we say in adequate praise of the following burst of sublime self-congratulation, put into the mouth of the great orator of antiquity ?—‘While I remember what I have been, I never can be less. External power can affect those only who have none intrinsically. I have seen the day, Eubulides, when the most august of cities had but one voice within her walls ; and when the stranger on entering them stopped at the silence of the gateway, and said, *Demosthenes is speaking in the assembly of the people !*’ We do not know whether there is anything as fine as this in the Greek orator : we are sure there is nothing finer either in him or any other author. We shall conclude with giving entire the conversation between Tiberius and Vipsania, and we are confident our readers will thank us for the perusal of so choice a specimen of elegant and impassioned composition.

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## POLITICAL CRITICISM

### THE LAUREAT

*The Morning Chronicle.*

September 20, 1813.

*The Courier* of Saturday contains a pretended contradiction, from authority, of our statement 'on the subject of the Laureat.' 'Some truth there is,' they say, in it, 'but dashed and brewed with lies.' To us who do not speak 'from authority,' it is always a consolation to find that there is *some truth* in what we say, and as to the latter part of the quotation, we receive it as a common and customary tribute from the civility of these polished writers. Their pens would be quite clogged with the honied sweets of courtly adulation, if it were not carried off by the strong acid of vulgar abuse. We do not know, however, how we have drawn down their indignation on the present occasion, except that they are so used to vent their stock of spleen upon our pages that they cannot help it. If there had been any material, or, indeed, any the most trivial error in our account, we believe the indefatigable captious zeal of *The Courier* would not have neglected to point it out. It appears that the choice lies between Mr. Scott and Mr. Southey; but 'it is *false*,' says *The Courier*, 'that any individual interest has endeavoured to turn the balance in favour of either of these Gentlemen. Their distinguished literary characters have been alone their recommendation.' And so they might continue to be to the end of time, unless some one, like Mr. Croker, having the energetic lines quoted by Mr. Southey as full before his eyes as *The Courier* has the various shades of our opinions respecting the Spanish war, should put an end to the eternal poise of undistinguishable merit, by saying, 'The Poet, Sir, is mine honest friend;' or unless Mr. Southey and Mr. Scott should agree to write coalition odes between them.

We did certainly anticipate Mr. Southey's appointment 'to the office,' and we could not help indulging a little pleasantry on the occasion. We believe that even Mr. Southey's own friends will not hear of his appointment without a smile. We cordially allow Mr. Southey to be an honest man and an excellent Poet, but we do not (with deference to the authority of *The Courier*) think him a bit better qualified for the post of 'Laureat' on either of these accounts, and we sincerely hope that it will not prove 'the *trou de rat*, the Ciudad

## THE LAUREAT

Rodrigo,' of both—' the Laureat Hearse where Lyric lies ! ' To us who are plain, straitforward men, and not gifted with those profound resources of political casuistry with which others are blest, there appears to be a little inconsistency between some of Mr. Southey's former writings and his becoming the *hired panegyrist* of the court. If there is no inconsistency between the two, we ask, whether fifteen years ago the mention of Mr. Southey's name, ' as a worthy person to fill the chair of the immortal Dryden,' would not have been considered as an intentional insult ?

But it seems we have made a jest at Mr. Southey's well-known opinions and literary labours in the cause of the Peninsula, which have been the cause of this revolution at court in his favour ; and it is proudly asserted, that ' his undiminished zeal for the liberties of mankind has awakened the enthusiasm, with which we reproach him, for the freedom of Spain.' We presume it is the same undiminished zeal for the liberties of mankind, which has also awakened the same ardour in *The Courier* and its patrons in the same cause.—Without entering into this question with *The Courier* (for we really despise their cant about liberty more than we do even their servile sophistry), we shall just say, that there does appear some slight disparity—a little falling off (sufficient to excite a smile in us, and a severer feeling of regret in Mr. Southey), between the splendour of his early projects for the liberties of mankind, and the utmost that he can now hope from the accomplishment of the freedom of Spain. We see but few and faint traces of resemblance between the romantic schemes of perfectibility so beautifully described by Mr. Southey and his friends, as about to be realized in ' *Philharmonia's* undivided dale,' and the cause of Spain, on which they, in their pride of youth, would have bestowed epithets not less insulting than those which *The Courier* falsely imputes to us. Why what a sort of men these poets are ! With what gaiety and alacrity they can lay the brightest colours on the darkest ground !

' Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox,  
In his loose tresses, from the furrow came,  
And the swink't hedger at his supper sate ;  
I saw them under a green mantling vine,  
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,  
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots :  
Their port was more than human as they stood ;  
I took it for a fairy vision  
Of some gay creatures of the element,  
That in the colours of the rainbow live,  
And play i'th' plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,  
And as I pass'd I worshipp'd : if those you seek,  
It were a journey like the path to Heaven  
To help you find them ! '

## THE POLITICAL AUTOMATON

The personal application of these lines may not perhaps be very intelligible to *The Courier*. No matter.

As to 'the poetical architecture of temples of glory, &c., to which Mr. Southey will, in his professional capacity, be required to contribute,' we really think it immaterial whether he chuses to raise them 'on the banks of the Tagus or the Tormes, the Ebro or the Douro, in the plains of Salamanca, or the fields of Vittoria.' But of this we remain sure, and we dare to re-echo 'our prognosticated prophecies' in the ears of *The Courier*, that till the Spaniards *build their own castles*, all the splendid structures that Mr. Southey, or anyone else, shall build for them, will be mere castles in Spain. *The Courier's* 'solemn temples and gorgeous palaces' will otherwise soon

'Melt into thin air;  
And like the baseless fabric of a vision,  
The unsubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a wreck behind!'

### THE POLITICAL AUTOMATON: A MODERN CHARACTER

*The Morning Chronicle.*

December 1, 1813.

*The thing* is hired to soothe or inflame the public mind, as occasion requires; and succeeds in misleading the ignorant by a voluntary abuse of terms and an unlimited command over the figures of speech. Its only principle is to make itself subservient to the will of its employer. And in order to become a convenient tool, it begins by being the dupe of its own artifice. It holds all its little acquirements in readiness to answer the most contemptible purposes—the defence of the folly or madness of the moment. From the pains it takes in dressing out its fib or sophistry, it grows fond of the dirty work. The force of habit hoodwinks what little understanding it has left. It at length asserts whatever it pleases, and believes whatever it asserts. It strains hard to reconcile contradictions, and redoubles the loudness of its vaunts and the fierceness of its gestures to hide the extravagance of its pretensions. It is confident of the future in proportion to the failure of the past; and is hardened over with the shame of repeated detection. Like a poor player, it struts and frets itself into a notion of the reality of the part it is acting—outstares common sense, belies experience, regulates the course of events by fustian phrases, treats the interests of states as the playthings of its pen, and turns humanity into a jest and a bye-word. When *the thing* is perfect, it unites the brutal violence of the bravo with the impudent levity of the prostitute. Yet, after all, and with so many qualifications, it is only a puppet!

# THE COURIER AND TIMES NEWSPAPERS

## THEATRICALS

*The Morning Chronicle.*

January 11, 1814.

It has been observed that the duet between Mr. Grimaldi and the Oyster crossed in love, *moves every muscle* in the house. We do not know whether to give most credit to the author for the invention or to the actor for his performance of this interesting morsel of sentimentality. An oyster certainly never found an abler confidant, nor one who sympathised more naturally with his friend. After the first surprise is over, Mr. Grimaldi enters into the affair with the gravity of a true Pythagorean philosopher, who is convinced that he either has been, or may himself hereafter be, an oyster 'crossed in love,' while with 'harp and voice' he resounds the sorrows of his new associate with as much solemnity and pathos, as Mr. Southey joins the triumph of Kings for the deliverance of mankind. The clown offers to his companion all the sympathy of humanity and all the consolations of friendship, and to heal the wounds of disappointed passion

'What's dear to all beholders  
A fine cod's head and shoulders.'

But this is refused with the indignant observation, that an oyster may be true, as well as crossed, in love. Much in the same manner our Laureat offers the French nation amends for all the misfortunes of the Revolution by the restoration of the Bourbons. It remains to be seen whether France will turn a deaf ear, like the shell-fish, to the importunity of her oldest and best friends. One of the best deceptions we ever witnessed is that in which the Harlequin, after being cut in pieces, and nailed piece-meal to the wall, again starts into life, and leaps upon the stage once more. We have known some political Harlequins, who, after undergoing a similar operation, have made an awkward attempt to exhibit an appearance of posthumous vivacity. The tricks in a pantomime often bear a striking resemblance to the changes in political life. At Sadler's Wells, some years ago, they put a young chimney-sweeper into a cauldron, who came out a little dapper volunteer. So the rude minstrel of the rustic train, by crossing the Irish Channel, is mellowed into a Birth-day Poet.

## ON THE COURIER AND TIMES NEWSPAPERS : A POSTSCRIPT

*The Morning Chronicle.*

January 21, 1814.

THE classical pen of *The Courier* not long ago charged us with spoiling one of the finest passages in Shakespeare. We should be sorry if the

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charge were true, because we have really more respect for this great English genius than for a whole legion of 'gentlemen and men of honour,' of the old or the new stamp, by tradition or by patent. We have not indeed read the extracts in *The Courier* from Mr. Coleridge's Lectures at Bristol, and wanting that new light, may perhaps be blind idolaters.

There are, however, one or two passages in the play of *Coriolanus* besides the fine one which we are said to have marred, which we thought conveyed a great deal of meaning. The first is the speech of Aufidius, which seems to us a transcript of what must pass in Buonaparte's mind, in reading the hyperboles of *The Times* and *The Courier*—

'I'm glad thou set'st thy mercy and thy honour  
At difference in thee : out of this I'll work  
Myself a former fortune.'

The second we leave for their own application.

'Away, my disposition, and possess me  
Some harlot's spirit : the smiles of knaves  
Tent in my cheeks, and school-boys' tears take up  
The glasses of my sight : a beggar's tongue  
Make motion through my lips.—I will not do 't,  
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,  
And by my body's action, teach my mind  
A most inherent baseness.'

It is said that there is no reason why we should not *propose* to the French people (there was a time when we would not suffer them to chuse for themselves) the restoration of the Bourbons. Why no, except that it is a great piece of impudence to hint to them as a modest proposal, and in the way of free choice, what we have been endeavouring to impose upon them so long as a matter of necessity. The question is, whether we are to enforce the adoption of this free boon by the same process as before. *The Times* say, 'We have given a native Prince to Holland and to Spain. Why then not to France?' Does the writer still persist that there is no difference between the two cases?

We have made these remarks, not with a view to irritate or recriminate, but to resist irritation and recrimination, by which we can at this moment gain nothing that we ought to gain. There is one ground of peace, just, honourable, attainable, secure, and permanent, which is laid down in the Declaration of the Allies, and by his Majesty's Ministers—there is another, recommended by *The Times* and *Courier*, and pursued by the Cossacks, namely, the desolation and degradation of France—which is neither safe, nor just, nor practicable, nor desirable. If the Allies, for any contingent advantage, or to gratify any old grudge, for any fancies or for any prejudices, throw away their present opportu-

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nities of making peace, and of making it permanent by the very act of having made it in the spirit of moderation and justice—if they forego their present imposing attitude, of having repelled invasion and maintained their own independence, for the chance of retorting aggression on others, and insulting that national independence which they profess to consider as inviolable, by dictating to France her form of government under pretence of offering her peace, then we say, they will richly deserve to reap all the natural consequences of their mistaken policy. On their heads and on those of their advisers be the responsibility.

## THE LEX TALIONIS PRINCIPLE

*The Morning Chronicle.*

February 26, 1814.

‘The vigorous prosecution of the war upon the territories of France has been, we hear, resolved upon by our Cabinet, in strict co-operation and unison with Russia, Prussia, and Austria. *There will be no more diplomatic proceedings till the Allied Armies are in possession of Paris. A just principle demands that he who has been at Berlin, Vienna, and Moscow, should behold in his turn the capital of France in the possession of the Sovereigns of Moscow, and Vienna, and Berlin.* This is the place where trial is to be made of the affection of the French people for Bonaparte. This is the spot which is to be the test and touchstone of his existence as a man. The despatches transmitted to Lord Castlereagh are not of a pacific nature. The Allies will receive overtures and proposals for a preliminary basis even before their armies get to Paris, but it is at Paris that they will make a full and explicit declaration of their views. This we highly applaud. What a crisis is at hand! What events must be disclosed before the expiration of the present week!’—*The Courier*, Feb. 18.

WE have been for some time prepared for this full and explicit declaration of their views by the pacific fomenters of war. ‘Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?’ By long practice we can give something like a shrewd guess at what is passing in the minds of these agitators and their employers, before it is ripe for disclosure.

‘Search then the ruling passion; there alone,  
The wild are constant, and the cunning known.  
This clue once found, unravels all the rest,  
The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.’

If there could have been any doubt remaining on this subject, the above passage forms a comment on the ultimate views and principles of these respectable persons (respectable at least from their consistency), which cannot henceforward be mistaken. The character of the passage itself is partly of a political and partly of a prophetic cast: it unlocks the secrets of cabinets, and the secrets of fortune; and is equally *au fait* as to what ought to be and to what is to be.

## THE LEX TALIONIS PRINCIPLE

Every obstacle vanishes before the full-plumed self-complacency of these parrots of office. As an authority for the views of their patrons, we bow to them (we are not unacquainted with the convenient conductor by which profound state-secrets and new *ignes fatui*, 'gliding meteorous,' are communicated to them with all the smartness and rapidity of an electric shock)—but as to the event, we must be excused. Their prognostics have not yet the stamp of infallibility. True non-juring politicians without the honesty, they may be; but not political conjurors for all that.

The best way to place this passage in the light in which it ought to be viewed, is to ask ourselves a single question. Let us suppose, then, for a moment, that Mr. Whitbread, or those Members of the Opposition who gave, at the opening of the session, such premature credit to the moderate and altered tone of Ministers, had, instead of relying on the good faith and plighted honour of the Prince, in his profession of a sincere desire to treat for peace with the French Ruler—instead of trusting to the sleek integrity of Lord Castlereagh, or the miraculous conversion of Lord Liverpool, had abruptly declared, 'We do not believe a word of all this; we have no confidence either in the pacific disposition of our own Government, or in the moderation of the Allies, who, we have no doubt, will seize the first opportunity to break the pledge thus given in the face of day, to Parliament, the country—to France, and to the world.' Would not such a declaration have been treated with natural indignation and contempt, as an affront to the Throne, a libel on the Government, an insult to our Allies, and as treason to the Country? What then is that—now that it is avowed from authority—which, if it had been anticipated three months ago by the Opposition, would have been an affront to the Throne, a libel on the Government, an insult to our Allies, and treason against the good faith and honour of the Country?

We certainly do not wonder that Lord Liverpool should have demurred to the admission of the new principle laid down by *The Courier*, as to the place of the negotiation; first, as he must be naturally jealous of Lord Castlereagh's getting the start of him in his long projected march to Paris; and, secondly, because, if his memory does not fail him along with his fortitude in quitting office, he must reject, as a personal attack, the new-fangled reasoning of the Cabinet sycophants, *viz.* that no peace can be honourably concluded till the Sovereigns of Berlin, Vienna, and Moscow, reach Paris, because Bonaparte has been at Moscow, Vienna, and Berlin; for he must recollect full well that the same three Sovereigns, like the three blind calendars of Bagdat, set out long since for the same place, with his



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Lordship's approbation and good liking (before the just and indispensable principle of *The Courier* was even dreamt of), on their own original stock of genius and humanity, and when not Moscow, or Vienna, or Berlin, but Ismael and Warsaw, were the watchword of these systematic lovers of justice. By the bye, what a vantage-ground must this 'just principle' of the present Cabinet give to any attempt to restore and vindicate the throne of Poland. But nothing of the kind is whispered between *The Courier* and its patrons; in their bird's-eye view of contingent events, there is no dotted line pointing out such a course of retributive justice. That sensibility of honour which 'feels a stain like a wound,' is here callous. The *summum jus*, and the *summa injuria*, have as close an affinity as ever. This project our metaphysical righters of wrongs will, we know, treat as an obsolete question, as an impracticable chimera. Thus it is that the refined justice of *The Courier* always turns out either an old joke or a new expedient.

One would think, as they were the capitals of the Continental Princes which have been visited by Bonaparte's arms, that our Government might have left it to them to determine how far the point of honour or diplomatic gravity required them to return the compliment. We should hope at least, that our own Sovereign will not be in haste to join them at the old place of assignation, because if there is any truth in the principle with which *The Courier* has enriched the modern war-code, the consequence would be that the sword could never be sheathed with honour till the French people had planted the purple banners of victory on our native shores. Such are the desperate and unheard-of theories of ruthless hostility with which these miserable tools of a faction insult our understandings, as plain household truths! We should deprecate such a meeting on another account. We should be sorry to see the supreme head of these realms (except upon very sure grounds) make one at this royal *partie quarrée*. The occasion, to be sure, would be fine—the scene tempting. So rich a groupe of Kings has not met together since the golden times of Ariosto, when it showered diadems, and the Soldan and the Sophi sat at one board. His Royal Highness might bespeak suitable apartments for himself and train in the old but spacious *Hotel de Ninon L'Enclos*, and carry over some of Sir Joshua's finest portraits, or Mr. Stroehling's historical pictures,<sup>1</sup> to repair the devastation committed

<sup>1</sup> We offer this suggestion from our anxious desire not to separate morals from politics, and shall, we hope, so far merit the thanks of those 'gentlemen and men of honour' who write in *The Times*. As the severity of *The Courier's* principles of political retribution, by which the invasion of an enemy's territory is to be inevitably followed up by the total loss of independence and even existence on the part of the aggressors, would, if acted upon, leave the shadow neither of independence nor

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by the Cossacks in the Louvre. Our Princes have but seldom an opportunity afforded them of travelling into foreign parts, and so triumphant a one might never occur again. But still we would not advise such a step to be taken hastily. For the present we would not be answerable for the event. We are not blinded by the smiles of fortune, nor, from the swiftness with which her wheel has of late turned round, does it appear to us to have become fixed and immovable. So many august personages might by some unforeseen fatality find the same difficulty in returning that they have had in reaching this long-wished-for goal of their ambition.

We think the scheme not only hazardous, but not very gratifying to the vanity of those whom it is meant to flatter. Instead of a refined compliment, it seems to us to contain a bitter sarcasm. Is it meant to be insinuated by the literary bolsterers of modern greatness, that the Sovereigns of Europe will make but a poor figure till they have done something to ape Bonaparte? Must they top the part of conquerors and heroes, in imitation of the Corsican upstart, to satisfy the scruples of their jealous admirers? Or why must the exploded farce of the march to Paris be again vamped up and brought out with fresh *éclat* (as a masterpiece of poetical justice) in opposition to the disastrous expedition to Russia? The meddling flatterers of courts in this mistake the pretensions of their patrons altogether. They are not so satisfied with the native dignity and circumstantial awe which invest the possessors of sovereign power. These writers, tinctured with the leaven of Jacobinism, absurdly require that they should be not only great kings, but great men. They look farther than to the state-pageant; they do not believe in their own idols. But it is surely not necessary that those who are 'born to greatness' should also 'achieve it.' Why should they be roused from the harmless still-life of a court, and the pleasing slumbers into which they had been lulled on a throne, to rival the fame and follow the

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existence to any state in Europe, so the puritanical and scrupulous morality of *The Times*, which shrinks with such exquisite susceptibility from the contamination of vice, would, we apprehend, put most of the Sovereigns of Europe out of a capacity of 'maintaining the relations of peace and amity' with their neighbours. It would be much better for those who are so very *tender-skinned* on this subject, not to inquire at all into the secret history of Courts or the private lives of Princes. These writers are bent on the return of the Bourbons, as conducive to the re-establishment of the exemplary morality of the old Court in France. We wish to ask whether on the same principles they approve of the restoration of Charles II in this country? Or whether there is much connection between the manners he brought back with him from France, and that 'pure religion breathing household laws,' which is supposed to be inseparable from *the good old times*.—Morality is a very fine word, but as we do not wish to be convicted either of hypocrisy or a libel in bur application of it, we in general chuse to pass it over.

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destinies of a vulgar madman? It was remarked by Swift that a perfect king should be a figure stuffed with straw. But even if any thing were wanting to these respectable persons, to place them on a level with Bonaparte, the present scheme would not answer the end. What a pity that the French Emperor has only one capital to satisfy the just pretensions of the Royal invaders! Or is one capital taken possession of by three monarchs equivalent to three taken possession of by one great captain? The arithmetical proportions do not hold; the moral alliteration is not correct; there is neither rhyme nor reason in the project. Some spirited episode must be added, which shall not be an exact parody on the text furnished by the French Emperor; some aggravating circumstances must be interwoven; some expiatory sacrifices offered up to satisfy the nice demands of regal justice. The French Emperor appeared at Berlin, Vienna, and Moscow, to demand peace: the full and explicit declaration of the views of the Sovereigns of Moscow, Vienna, and Berlin at Paris will probably require something more.

It is this circumstance which shews the hollowness of the principle itself, and the impossibility of introducing the *lex talionis* as a rigid clause in the public law of Europe. Each nation will of course claim the privilege for itself, and will remember only the injuries it has sustained. Thus the plea of right will be made the pretext of everlasting wrong. The tide of war will be rolled back without ceasing with every ebbing and flowing of success, and thus endless commotion and the destroying whirlwind will become the only forerunners of the halcyon peace. Will our political wizards say to the infuriated passions of men, when once set afloat, 'Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther?' Or will the Editors of *The Times* and *The Courier*, after marking out the lists, be present, as bottle-holders, to see fair play? We fear, that even the virtuous Moreau, or the heroic Crown Prince of Sweden, would, in such an event, scarcely have authority to assign the precise measure of barbarous revenge, or stem the torrent of regal justice in the height of its career and the plenitude of its triumph. Or are we to leave the event to chance?

'And let one spirit of the first-born Cain reign in all hearts,  
That man, being set on bloody courses,  
The rude scene may end, and darkness be the burier of the dead!'

If political partisans, or if kings, held the scales of justice as Gods, and if with the power they had the beneficence of Gods, such a certainty of retributive justice might be a means of preventing unprovoked aggressions, and diminishing the calamities of war. But neither of these previous suppositions is true. For it must happen generally,

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that that power which has suffered most, or been the most aggrieved, is not the strongest—that is, able to revenge its own cause; and that it is only the extremity of suffering, or the irritating sense of oppression, that has supplied the deficiency of physical by moral strength. And that to proceed, after having repelled the aggression, to retort the punishment on the heads of the aggressors, is to throw all the advantages of combating on their own soil, and all the stimulus of the sense of danger and suffering—that is, the whole weight of physical advantages and moral motives, into the opposite scale. Or if the physical strength has been the greatest on the side which has suffered most, as in the present instance, then there will be a tolerable presumption at least, that these sufferings have arisen from a neglect or contempt of the fundamental principle of the independence and security of states; so that instead of requiring any new sufferings or sacrifices to establish this great practical truth, it will have already received its highest sanction in those very events which are considered as a sacrilegious violation of it. Farther, this principle, as a practical security for the good behaviour of sovereigns or of kingdoms, involves an anomaly in human nature; for it is ridiculous to suppose that a people will voluntarily submit to all the miseries of war, from a sense of abstract justice, who have not been deterred by any such sense of justice from wantonly inflicting those miseries on others.

## THE LOUVRE

*The Morning Chronicle.*

March 24, 1814.

'If Blücher, if the Cossacks, get to Paris,—to Paris, the seat of Bonaparte's pride and insolence,—what mercy will they shew to it, or why should they shew it any mercy? Will they spare the precious works of art, to decorate the palace of a monster whom they justly detest? Will they treat the Thuilleries more tenderly than the French Officers, only eight months ago, openly threatened to treat Berlin? Is Paris, Bonaparte's Paris, more sacred than Moscow? or are the slaves of the Corsican more inviolable than the brave and virtuous citizens of Hamburgh? No, no; the indignant warriors will cry,—

“Away to Heav'n respective Lenity,  
And fire-eyed Fury be my conduct now.”

'There is no other mode by which the Parisians can disarm the vengeance which now so closely impends over them, than by disclaiming for ever him whose crimes have been the just cause of that vengeance. Paris under the white standard, returning to loyalty and virtue, may be spared by a generous conqueror;—but Paris, identified with Bonaparte, must partake all the vindictive sentiments which are attached to that hateful name.

[Yet some time ago this writer assured us that if the French people identified themselves with Bonaparte, they ought not to be separated from him.]

'In what momentous times do we live! Perhaps, the famous city of which we speak may even now be laid in ashes! Perhaps and more welcome be the omen, it

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may have returned to its allegiance, and proclaimed its native Sovereign, and set a price on the head of that wicked rebel who still dares to call himself the Emperor of France.'—*Times*, March 17.

'Nay, if you mouth, I'll rant as well as you!'

It is a pity to spoil this morsel of Asiatic eloquence, so worthy of the subject and the sentiments; but the evident meaning of it is, that the French must expect to do penance in sack-cloth and ashes, or consent to put on the old livery jackets, made up for them by our army-agents long ago, and which have unfortunately lain on hand ever since. If so, they must needs be 'pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall.' Yet we hardly know what to say to the chivalrous and classical politicians of the Stock Exchange. They are not driven to the extremity of Gothic rage by the ranking inveteracy, and old unsatisfied grudge of the Pitt-school. Yet surely no pitiable enthusiast that

'Scrawls

With desperate charcoal on his darken'd walls,'

can be more incorrigible to reason. They are always setting out on their way to Paris from Moscow, while the Pitt-school studiously return to join Lord Hawkesbury in the year 1793, or they think the whole ceremony incomplete! The treaty of Pilnitz does not stand between our modern popular incendiaries and their just revenge! They live only in 'this present ignorant time!' They see the white standard of the Bourbons waving over the walls of Paris, unspotted with the blood of millions of Frenchmen! They do not seem ever to have known, or (with our poet-laureat) they forget, that the same standard to which our milky politicians advise the French people, sick of destruction, and panting for freedom, to fly for deliverance and repose, is that very standard, which, for twenty years, hovering round them, now seen like a cloudy speck in the distance—now spreading out its drooping lilies wide, has been the cause of that destruction—has robbed them at once of liberty and of repose!

Moscow is, however, the watch-word of the renegados of *The Times*. It seems to them just that Paris should be sacrificed to revenge the setting fire to Moscow by the Russians, and that the monuments of art in the Louvre ought to be destroyed because they are Bonaparte's. No; they are ours as well as his;—they belong to the human race; he cannot monopolize all genius and all art. But these madmen would, if they could, blot the Sun out of heaven, because it shines upon France. They verify the old proverb, 'Tell me your company, and I'll tell you your manners!' They, no more than their friends the Cossacks, can perceive any

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difference between the Kremlin and the Louvre. There is at least one difference, that the one may be built up again, and the other cannot. For there, in the Louvre, in Bonaparte's Louvre, are the precious monuments of art—the sacred pledges which human genius has given to time and nature;—there ‘stands the statue that enchants the world;’ there is the *Apollo*, the *Laocoon*, the *Dying Gladiator*, the *Head of the Antinous*, *Diana with her Fawn*, and all the glories of the antique world;—

‘There is old Proteus coming from the sea,  
And wreathed Triton blows his winding horn.’

There, too, are the two *St. Jeromes*, Corregio's and Dominichino's; there is Raphael's *Transfiguration*, the *St. Mark* of Tintoret, Paul Veronese's *Marriage of Cana*, the *Deluge* of Nicholas Poussin, and Titian's *St. Peter Martyr*;—all these, and more than these, of which the world is scarce worthy. Yet all these amount to nothing in the eyes of those virtuosos the Cossacks, and their fellow-students of *The Times*! ‘What's Hecuba to them, or they to Hecuba?’ But we must be allowed to see with our own eyes, and to have certain feelings of our own. We will not be brayed by these quacks *like fools in a mortar*. We too, as Mr. Burke expresses it, have ‘real feelings of flesh and blood beating in our bosoms.’ ‘We look up with awe to Kings; with affection to parliaments; with duty to magistrates; with reverence to priests; and with respect to nobility.’ But all this is a machine that goes on of itself, and may be repaired if out of order. We bow willingly to Lords and Commoners, though we know that ‘breath can make them as a breath has made.’ Blücher, Wittgenstein, Winzingerode, and Ktzichigoff, are true heroes; their names become the mouth well, and rouse the ear as the sound of a trumpet; but they are the heroes of a day, and all that they have done might be as well done by others to-morrow. But here it is: once destroy the great monuments of art, and they cannot be replaced. Those mighty geniuses, who have left their works behind them an inheritance to mankind, live but once to do honour to themselves and their nature. ‘But once put out their light, and there is no Promethean heat that can their light relumine.’ Nor ought it ever to be re-kindled, to be extinguished a second time by the harpies of the human race. What have ‘the worshippers of cats and onions’ to do with those triumphs of human genius, which give the eternal lie to their creed? We would therefore recommend these accomplished pioneers of civilisation and social order, after they have done their work at the Louvre, to follow the river-side, and they will come to a bare inclosure, surrounded by four low walls.

## CHATEAUBRIAND—THE QUACK

It is the place where the Bastille stood : let them rear that, and all will be well. And then some whiffling poet who celebrated the fall of that monument of mild paternal sway—that sacred ark of the confidence of Kings—that strong bulwark of ‘time-hallowed laws,’ and precious relic of ‘the good old times,’ in an ode, may hail its restoration in a sonnet !

## CHATEAUBRIAND—THE QUACK

*The Examiner.*

September 3, 1815.

THERE are people in the East who fall down before the Jaggernaut, and are crushed to pieces by the wheels of the idol which they worship. There are people in the West who do the same.

Chateaubriand the quack, the \*\*\*\*\* of France, the proselaureat of the Court of the Thuilleries, is one of these. He made a speech the other day to Louis XVIIIth, to this effect :—‘ We are devoted to your Majesty, because we believe that the first wish of your Majesty’s heart is to give liberty and happiness to France. But even if this were not the case, we should not be less bound to defend your Majesty’s *sacred person*, the legitimate descendant of our Kings, and our natural lord and master. And it is evident that a Monarch to whom this language is held is not a tyrant, and that those who address it to him are not slaves.’—To tell a Monarch that he has an absolute power to do what he pleases, to give a whole nation happiness and liberty or to take it away from them, but that he has so much goodness as to prefer the former to the latter, on which goodness of his all their right to happiness and liberty depends, certainly proves that the King is not a tyrant, and the person who addresses him not a slave.—‘ Whip me such prating knaves.’

This political changeling when young was so violent an admirer of Rousseau’s most violent paradoxes, that at the age of seventeen or eighteen he quitted civilised society to return to the state of nature, and passed two or three years among the North American Indians. Here he composed his *Atala*. Whether he thought this too good a thing to be lost to the world, he soon after returned to France, where the Revolution having broken out, to which his brother had fallen a victim, the lively imagination of M. Chateaubriand took alarm ; he became reconciled to social order, and a convert to the divine right of kings. He came over to this country, and taught French in a small provincial town, where he attracted the notice of several persons of respectability by his talents. Afterwards he was connected with the celebrated orator Fontanes, in London ; and, after the return of that gentleman to Paris, he procured, through the interest of Lucien

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

Bonaparte, leave for Chateaubriand to return to France, where he was soon after introduced to Bonaparte himself, and held a literary employment under him. During this period he published different works, which increased his reputation; and among others, the *Génie du Christianisme*. After the death of the Duke d'Enghien (whom Bonaparte is accused of having murdered because he was not willing that he, the said royal Duke, should assassinate him) the fanciful conscience of M. Chateaubriand took another false alarm, he gave up his employment, and retired to the valley of Montmorenci, about forty miles from Paris. Here (such was his popularity as a writer and his talents as an interesting converser) he was followed by several ladies of fashion, who took country houses in the neighbourhood, and formed a little court round him. The women in France, it is said, were never favourable to Bonaparte, because under the old *régime* every thing was done through them, and under the new dynasty, nothing. Our author remained in this retirement, we believe, till the late events, so glorious for himself and his country, broke out, when M. Chateaubriand emerged once more into publicity, and was the first person in Paris who assumed the white cockade! The fantastic tricks which he played afterwards before the Duchess D'Angoulême and others are well known to our readers.

### THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN. I

*The Examiner.*

September 24, 1815.

SIR,—Will you have the goodness to insert the following extract from Mr. Cobbett's *Political Register* for June 24. It is part of a letter to Lord Castlereagh:—

'The death of the Duke of Enghien took place in the month of March, 1804. He was tried by a special military commission at Vincennes. The President of the Court-martial was General Hulén. The charges against him were:—1. Having carried arms against the French Republic. 2. Having offered his services to the English Government, the enemy of the French people. 3. Having received, and having, with accredited agents of that government, procured means of obtaining intelligence in France, and conspiring against the internal and external security of the State. 4. Being at the head of a body of French and other emigrants, paid by England, and formed on the frontiers of France, in the districts of Fribourg and Baden. 5. Having attempted to foment intrigues at Strasbourg, with a view of procuring a rising in the adjacent departments, for the purpose of operating a diversion favourable to England. 6. That he was one of those concerned in the conspiracy, planned by the English, for assassin-



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ating the First Consul, and intending in case of the success of this plot to return to France.

‘These were the charges preferred against the Duke of Enghien. The court-martial found him guilty upon all and every one of the charges, and the court was unanimous in their decision. They were unanimous also in condemning him to death. This sentence was passed in conformity to the second article, title 4, of the military code of offences and punishments, passed on the 11th of January, 1795; and the second section of the first title of the ordinary penal code, established on the 6th October, 1791, expressed in the following terms: “Article 2d (11th January, 1795), every individual, whatever be his state, quality, or profession, convicted of acting as a spy for the enemy, shall be sentenced to the punishment of death.”—“Article 2d (6th October, 1791), every one connected with a plot or conspiracy, tending to disturb the tranquillity of the state, by civil war, by arming one class of citizens against the other, or against the exercise of legitimate authority, shall be punished with death.” This sentence was put in execution, and thus ended this unfortunate young man.

‘Now there never has been any doubt expressed, that I have heard of, of the truth of these charges. So far from it, that the friends of the Duke of Enghien have made it a merit in him, to have done the acts here imputed to him. It was afterwards fully proved, if we give credit to the official documents of the French, that the Duke had acted his full share in what was carrying on on the frontiers of France, against the peace of the Republic and the life of the First Consul; but no proof of this sort is necessary, seeing that it is acknowledged, to the honour of the Duke of Enghien, by his friends, that he had done all these things of which he was accused. They say that it was great merit in him to do all that he was accused of doing. They say, that the government existing in France was an usurpation; that the Duke of Enghien, as a loyal subject to the king, and especially as one of the royal family, had a right to do every thing that he could to overturn the French government, and to cause to be put to death the First Consul, who was at the head of that government. But let us see how this doctrine will suit, if applied to ourselves. There was a time when the Hanoverians, who were put upon the throne in England, at the beginning of the last century, were called usurpers by the loyal adherents of the family of Stuart, and, especially, by the members of that family.—When the loyal subjects of the Stuarts had the audacity to call our Hanoverian Sovereigns *usurpers*, and aided and assisted by the malice, the insolence, and the arms, of the perfidious and tyrannical Bourbons; when the loyal subjects of the Stuarts, thus encouraged and supported, threatened England with invasion, and indeed actually

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invaded her, for the purpose of making her submit to the *divine right* of that stupid family, what did his Majesty's predecessors do? Did they stand quietly by, as our writers would have had the First Consul do, in the case of the Duke of Enghien; did they stand and gape like sucking geese, when that gallant youth, the son of the Pretender King, was approaching towards London with an army of what he called *loyalists*, but whom our forefathers called *rebels*? No, faith! our good Hanoverian Kings did no such thing. They set a price upon his head, *dead or alive*; they pursued his adherents with the utmost rigour; and I remember hearing my father say, once when he returned from London, that he had seen some of their heads still sticking upon Temple-Bar. I believe, my Lord, that these heads remained there for nearly forty years. A pretty good spell to give the loyal subjects of the Stuarts a caution against acting upon the principle of *divine right* and "*in contempt*," as your saucy countryman, the pensioned Burke, called it, "*of the will of the nation*." All I have to ask of your Lordship is, if the execution of the Duke of Enghien was a *murder*, what was the execution of the Scotch Lords, and what were the killings of Glenco in the year 1745?

'There is one remaining point, connected with the death of the Duke of Enghien. The foul-mouthed man who writes in the *Times* newspaper, always is representing Napoleon as having gone *by night*, like an assassin, into the territory of the Elector of Baden, to seize this same Royal Duke, and to bring him away into France to murder him. At any rate, a great outcry is made by all the haters of the French, about the violation of neutral territory. The truth, is this:—After the trial of Pichegru and his brother conspirators; after the discovery of the correspondence between Mr. Drake, our Envoy at Munich, and persons in France; after the discovery of the whole grand scheme which was then carrying on against the existence of the French Government, and the life of the First Consul, the French Government made a requisition to the Elector of Baden, for the purpose of arresting the Duke of Enghien. This requisition, which was dated at Paris on the 10th of March, 1804, stated "that the First Consul, from the successive arrests of the banditti which the English Government has sent to France, and from the result of the trials which have been here instituted, has obtained a complete knowledge of the extensive part which the English agents at Offenbourg have had in those horrible plots, which have been devised against his own person, and against the safety of France." The requisition then proceeds to state, that the First Consul had learned that the Duke of Enghien was in the territory of Baden, and that looking upon him to be amongst the most determined enemies of France, the First Consul had found it necessary to send some

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troops into the Baden territory, to seize these, the authors of a crime, the nature of which put them out of the protection of the law of nations. The requisition concluded by saying, that General Caulaincourt was charged with the execution of it. The seizure of the Duke did not take place till after this notification : so that the thing was not done so suddenly, and so by stealth, as we are told it was. But still, as no permission appears to have been given by the Elector of Baden, there certainly was a violation of neutral rights, which I am, my Lord, not at all disposed to justify, but which I will not speak of in very violent language, lest my words should be quoted and applied to the seizure of Napper Tandy at Hamburgh ; to the forcing of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Republic of Genoa into our war of 1793 ; to the seizure of the Danish fleet because the Danes refused to declare war against France ; to the late affairs of Valparaico and Faval ; to the forcible passage by the Allies through the Swiss territory last year, and to many other cases.'—*Political Register*, Vol. XXVII. p. 778.

I trust, Sir, that here is enough, for the present, to prevent you or me from disavowing 'the profligate doctrine,' that the Chief of a State, not being a King born, can have a right to defend his person or government against any Royal Duke who may conspire against it. I am not very fond of political controversy, but neither am I fond of eating my words, and still less willing that you should have to eat them for me. I do not think there will be any occasion for either.—Your Correspondent, 'Fair Play,' has at least chosen the safe side of the question. If he is fond of seeing fair play, he had better try to prevent the Catholics from cutting the throats of the Protestants in the South of France, by holding up his pen between them ; or set himself up as a literary umpire, between the Cortes and the Inquisition in Spain. He advises you, Sir, to be pure and moral. Let him take his doctrine to Court.—He says, that I have advanced 'a profligate doctrine,' though he himself allows the facts which I have stated, if true, justify the inference. This is an attempt to gain himself a character for 'purity and morality' at the expense of his candour.—His letter in itself does not deserve notice. In about a dozen lines, it contains four assumptions of the question, and two direct falsifications of it. He, however, comes upon one with a peremptory air, like a sort of modern Cloten, and insists upon an answer, which he shall have.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Cloten. What slave art thou ?

Guiderius. A thing

More slavish did I ne'er than answering

A slave without a knock.

Cloten. Thou art a robber,

A law-breaker, a villain : yield thee, chief.

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

I happen, Sir, to be acquainted with the Gentleman who invented the nickname of 'the Corsican' for Bonaparte, and who used to boast that this nickname, notwithstanding its absurdity, had done more to promote the war, and make a bugbear of the person to whom it was applied, than any other circumstance. He was at that time called nothing but 'the Corsican,' 'the upstart,' 'the child and champion of jacobinism,' and these epithets were vociferated with just the same passion, hatred, and contempt, as he has since been called 'the murderer,' 'the monster,' 'the poisoner,' 'the tyrant,' &c. &c. This circumstance alone may shew the 'fair play' that Bonaparte was likely to have in this war of nicknames; and the phrensy has at length reached such a height, that any one who doubts the truth of the accusation, is considered as an accomplice in the crime. That modest and disinterested Gentleman, Mr. Lewis Goldsmith, in a *pimping* letter in the *Chronicle* the other day, wondered, in his great simplicity, that any one should be found to defend the crimes of Bonaparte, for no other reason than because some one had expressed an unwillingness to give implicit belief to any crime which he (Mr. L. Goldsmith) might be disposed to lay to his charge.

In addition to the facts above stated, I beg leave to ask your Correspondent the following questions, which as he is a man of nice notions of justice, may serve as an exercise for his political casuistry :—

1. Whether, if his Majesty, Louis XVIII., had made the like excursion into the territory of Baden to kidnap Bonaparte or any of his family, found lurking about the frontiers for the like purpose, and had had them hanged or shot, in a wood or in a plain, by night or by day,—the conscience of the quack Chateaubriand would have taken the same alarm as in the former case? I think not; and I call that conscience 'false,' which makes the crime to consist in the person and not in the thing. 'There's a divinity doth hedge a king.' That is M. Chateaubriand's conscience. It is not mine. The great aggravation of Bonaparte's offences, with fools and knaves of all sorts, was that they wanted the *jure divino* unction.

2. Whether, if Napper Tandy, after being seized in a neutral territory, had been tried and executed, which his death in all probability alone prevented,—whether your Correspondent 'Fair Play' would have dared to have called this a murder; and whether, not having

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*Guiderius.* To whom? To thee? What art thou? Have not I  
An arm as big as thine? a heart as big?

——— Say what thou art,

Why I should yield to thee?

*Cloten.* Thou villain base,

Know'st me not by my cloaths?

*Guiderius.* Thou art some fool, I am loth to beat thee.'

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

might as well as right on his side, he would have trumped up a foolish letter in a newspaper to insist on it?

3. What became of the husband of Catherine II. and of the father of Alexander I.? Why did no coroner's inquest of crowned heads sit upon their bodies? Why did not the *high police* of Europe take cognisance of these events? Why was no hubbub made about them in the Newspapers? Why has not the world been convulsed by them? The death of Louis XVI. has perhaps cost the lives of ten millions of men. Is it not that regicide means the killing of a king by the people—the getting rid of the tyranny with the tyrant? but if one tyrant is killed by another, or by a Court cabal, &c. so that the firm lose nothing by the bargain, it is no great matter! If Louis XVIII., the bestower of charters, were put out of the way by the *rectilignes*, what would the pious, humane, and loyal Editor of the *Times* say to it? He would hush the affair up in his solemn courtly way, and with a few taffeta phrases, and there an end; but, if the same thing should be done by the French people, in the fulness of their desire—Lord, how he would foam at the mouth, stamp, stare, and rave like a madman for twenty years to come!

It has become the fashion of late to thrust ones-self into the company of great people, in order to ask them impertinent questions. If I had a safe opportunity, I think I could startle our most accomplished interrogators in that way.—‘Pray, Mr. Walter Scott, as you think the martyrdom of Charles I. the most atrocious event in modern history, what do you think would have become of James II. if he had not abdicated?’<sup>1</sup>

PETER PICKTHANK.

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN. II

*The Examiner.*

October 8, 1815.

‘Masterless passion sways it to the mood  
Of what it likes or loaths.’

SIR,—The history of modern politics is the history of nicknames. The use of this figure of speech is that it excites a strong idea without requiring any proof. It is superior to all evidence, for it does not rest upon it, and operates with the greatest force in proportion to the want of probability. Facts present a tangible and definite idea to the mind, a train of causes and consequences, each accounting for the other, and

<sup>1</sup> I might have availed myself of an account of a conversation, in which Bonaparte is stated to have laid the blame of the execution of the Duke d'Enghien on Talleyrand. But I do not place much faith in these accounts, unless when ‘the General’ is made to say better things than his reporters could invent for him. To be sure, this very often happens.

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leading to a positive conclusion. But a nickname clothes itself with all the terrors of vague abstraction. To call a man a *murderer*, a *tyrant*, &c. is to 'shew a monster to the thought;' it is to call up an abstract idea of crime, unconnected with any preceding motives or circumstances, and as if it were a thing that stood alone by itself, like the name which represents it. Brand a person with a nickname, and it is all one whether you can swear to the facts yourself, or only swear, with Mr. Lewis Goldsmith, that you have heard them from some one else. Belief is only a strong impression; and the malignity of the accusation passes for a proof of the crime. This is the secret of the compositions of our most successful newspaper writers. They load a man with unheard-of imputations, to which we yield our assent in proportion as they excite our abhorrence. The readers, accustomed to this tragic tone, mistake the gratification of their prejudices and passions for the indulgence of a high sense of moral indignation; and consider any effort to undeceive them, or screen the object of their hatred from the fury of their zeal, by a recurrence to the real facts, as an attempt to undermine the purity of their moral sentiments and to confound every distinction between right and wrong.

Your Correspondent, 'Fair Play,' is of this class of readers who prefer poetry to prose. He seems to be rather shy of the company of that downright matter-of-fact gentleman, Mr. Cobbett, to which I had introduced him, and has taken refuge in the *Annual Register*. I cannot wish him joy of his escape. The official documents relating to the Duke d'Enghien, partly French, and partly others, (the English ones will be found not the least deserving of attention,) occupy eighty columns of this work. They are the most elaborate and explicit account of a *murder* on record. They contain—1. An account of the circumstances of the death of the Duke d'Enghien, who was tried, condemned, and executed, according to the sentence of the law, as a traitor, rebel, and spy against the French Republic, on charges, some of which were matters of notoriety, and the others proved in evidence to the unanimous satisfaction of the court-martial appointed to try them. 2. They contain the details of the various conspiracies, plots, and intrigues then carrying on against the Government, and (as it is here asserted) against the life of the First Consul, by Pichegru, Georges, and other Emigrants, in conjunction with the English, whose share in these transactions (with the exception of the plan to assassinate) is admitted and justified by Lord Hawkesbury in his circular note, of which Talleyrand made so good a use. 3. They do *not* contain the ten letters of Mr. Drake's correspondence with the French conspirators, but they contain quite enough about that correspondence; and they contain Lord Hawkesbury's acknowledgement of its authen-

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

ticity, and justification of his conduct. His Lordship was at this time a long way off on his march to Paris, and could not stop to pick his road. What has your Correspondent to oppose to all this? The slightest shadow of proof, direct or indirect, that the Duke was not really implicated in these transactions? Does he point out any improbability or inconsistency in the accounts? No; he gets rid of the whole evidence of the French official documents with a threadbare quotation, and the following assumption of the questions:—‘In the present instance, when an assassination is to be justified by means of the assassins themselves, who does not see the peculiar force of such *ex parte* proof?’ ‘Fair Play’ is ready to allow the right of the French Government ‘to punish capitally those who plot its destruction.’ But when it comes to the push, and the French Government exercise this right and publish the official documents of the mode and grounds of their proceedings, our casuist comes in with an unexpected qualification, and says, *But when the murder is to be justified by the murderers themselves, who does not see the force of such ex parte evidence?* That is to say, the putting to death any person plotting against the Government is not murder, but the publication of the official documents of the trial is ‘an attempt to justify murder by calumny.’ This will never do.

The Duke d’Enghien, the most zealous, the most active and determined of the enemies of Bonaparte, shortly after the disbanding of the army of the Prince of Condé, in which ‘he had distinguished himself the whole of the preceding war,’ had fixed his residence within a short distance of the frontier, in the society of a few select friends, and where, as the Editor of the *Annual Register* delicately expresses it, ‘the locality of his retreat furnished him with opportunities of receiving earlier intelligence of what was passing in France than if he had been further removed from the frontier.’ Who would blame him?—Two of these select friends arrested with him were the wife and sister of Lajollais, one of the accomplices of Pichegru and Georges. ‘From the successive arrests of the banditti who had been landed in France, and from the result of the trials which were instituted in consequence,’ the French Government came to the knowledge that his Royal Highness was not lurking near the frontier for the gratification of idle curiosity. They had him arrested, he was tried and condemned before a regular tribunal, on distinct charges brought against him, and the inevitable conclusion of all this in the mind of your Correspondent is that he was *murdered*! Where is the proof? Why, he was murdered, because the court-martial appointed to try him were ‘a junto of assassins.’ He first proves the assassination by calling the French Commission a set of assassins, and he then proves that they were assassins, by calling the sentence of the law a murder. ‘Why, Sir, the

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plain and notorious fact is, that a set of Bonaparte's creatures<sup>1</sup> (I should call them a junto of assassins) did for an hour or two interrogate their unhappy prisoner, ere they pronounced upon him the sentence of their mock-justice.' I do not wonder that your Correspondent should sympathise with the torture of this poor young man in being asked questions which he could not well answer. 'No evidence has ever been published, or was, I believe, produced.' The official account contradicts this. 'The Commission being opened, the President ordered the officer, appointed to conduct the accusation, to read all the papers which went either to the crimination or acquittal of the prisoner,' &c. 'And after proceedings such as these, what followed? An instant and nocturnal execution, indicating the perpetration of a crime so *atrocious*, that the feelings *even of slaves might have been roused by the sight of it to indignation and resistance.*' This passage is very pleasingly penned. Such is what F. P. calls the short *history* of that abominable transaction, and which he will oppose to Mr. Cobbett's. He adds, 'I ought by the way to have remarked, that although it be true that the last of the articles of accusation (see *Annual Register*) does charge conspiracy against the First Consul's life, yet the sentence even of this blessed Military Commission says not a word about it; so that the charge of intended assassination originally made by P. P. is not borne out even by the very proofs which the ingenuous author has borrowed from Mr. Cobbett.' Now F. P. we suppose did not read the French official account from his distrust of all such official accounts, and has borrowed his proofs from the historical abstract of the *Annual Register*. The official report says—'The question was put by the President on each of the charges separately. Each of the members in succession delivered his opinion. The President was the last in delivering his judgment. The result was, ~~that~~ the Court unanimously *found the prisoner guilty of all the six charges.*' F. P. also appears to be wrong in saying that the Commission was secret. The report says, 'The officer conducting the prosecution and the register *as well as the auditors* were then ordered to withdraw.' He is also wrong in the following correction of Cobbett: 'The fact is, that this outrage (the seizure of the Duke) did take place *by night*, which Cobbett does not, because he cannot deny, but tries with his usual modest assurance to insinuate the contrary.' He might have asserted the contrary, for

<sup>1</sup> Would he have had the Commission composed of half Royalists and half Republicans, in order to see fair play, or would he have had the warrant for the execution sent over for Louis XVIII. to sign? Or should it have been submitted to a Congress of the Allied Sovereigns? It *bad* the approbation of all those Sovereigns, except the Emperor Alexander, then a very young man, and of the mad King of Sweden, who could not believe that one Monsieur Napoleon Bonaparte should make himself an Emperor without his leave.



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though the French troops passed the Rhine in the night, the arrests took place the following day : p. 627-8, vol. 46.

But your Correspondent lays great stress on the similarity of this case to the proceedings of Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety. 'Tried indeed,' he exclaims! 'So were the victims of Robespierre, if the hollow formality which preceded their butchery can be called a trial! The Committee of Public Safety too was always unanimous!' So that after these proceedings, no trial, no condemnation can stand good, and the unanimity of the Judges proportionably invalidates the justice of the sentence. In the first place, Sir, the trials of Robespierre were public, and the great objection which your Correspondent makes to that of the Duke d'Enghien is that it was secret. In the second place, the proof that those trials were not fair was the indiscriminate condemnation of those brought before the Committees, which cannot apply to the case of a single individual. In the third place, I suppose it is notorious and undisputed that many innocent persons were put to death by those tribunals. To make out the charge of murder, it is necessary to prove either that any person has been put to death by mere violence, without the form of law, or that his innocence of the charges brought against him was so clear and notorious, that those who condemned him must have known that he was innocent. Was it then notorious, 1. That the Duke d'Enghien had *not* carried arms against the French Republic? 2. Was it notorious that he had *not* offered his services to the English Government? 3. Was it notorious that he had *not* procured means (in connection with accredited agents from our Government) of obtaining intelligence in France and conspiring against the security of the State? 4. Was it notorious that he was *not* at the head of a body of emigrants paid by England, in the districts of Fribourg and Baden? Or, 5. That he had *not* attempted to form intrigues at Strasburgh to procure a rising in the adjacent departments; or, 6. That he was *not* concerned in a conspiracy to assassinate the First Consul, intending in case of success to return to France? The last is the most questionable point, because as the most obnoxious it would be kept most in the background, and be most difficult of proof. It seems however to have been the only chance of success; and several of the ringleaders boasted of the plan. I ask whether if it had been executed, the perpetrators would have been punished as assassins, or rewarded as accomplices?—We know the discreet rule here—

'Be ignorant of the knowledge, dearest chuck,  
Till thou applaud the deed.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'It is of very little consequence,' says Mr. Drake in his official correspondence, 'by whom the beast is brought to the ground; it is sufficient if you are all ready to join in the chase.' I would ask, is it likely that the gallant and spirited Duke, being on the spot, should absent himself from such royal sport, or not wish to be in at the death?

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As to those friends of the Duke who acknowledge and applaud the conduct of which he is accused, I suppose Mr. Cobbett means the *Times* and *Courier*, and their readers. Does not 'Fair Play' himself call the Duke 'gallant'? Gallant in what? And why was Bonaparte so afraid of him? 'In the last place, (says your Correspondent) although the Duke, had he been found within the limits of France, might have been lawfully seized, lawfully proceeded against, and lawfully put to death, if it could have been *openly* proved that he was engaged in a conspiracy against the State, or even by the then law of France, executed as an emigrant who had borne arms against her; yet unquestionably the *whole* transaction, *as it took place*, was illegal.' The seizure was the only flaw in the proceedings; the rest was in order. Such, however, is this gentleman's desire to see fair play, and to look into the rights of every thing: that because this trial took place in France and not in England, because the Duke was tried by the laws of his own country, and not of ours, because the trial was not transferred to the Old Bailey, because your Correspondent was not in the jury-box, and Lord Ellenborough on the bench,—he will have it to be a murder. The fact is, it was thought that Bonaparte would suffer any plots, 'however manifest and perilous,' to be carried on against his government or person sooner than touch royal blood. It was a mere question of courage, not at all of justice, between the two parties. He did pounce upon one of the family who presumed on the sacredness and inviolability of their persons; and the plots and conspiracies from that time ceased. This was thought a most unwarrantable indignity offered not only to the blood royal of France, but of other countries. The Emperor Alexander (the Sir Charles Grandison of modern Europe) put on mourning on the occasion, and it has ever since been the fashion, by way of set-off, to call it a murder. As to the seizure itself, its illegality is rendered in some degree doubtful by an article in the treaty of Luneville, by which it is stipulated, that neither France nor Germany should afford protection to the subjects of either State plotting in their dominions against the peace and safety of the other. The best answer, however, on this subject is, Talleyrand's question put to the Russian Minister, who remonstrated against the condemnation of the Duke d'Enghein, on the ground of the invasion of neutral territory: 'The remonstrance Russia now makes, leads to this question:—if, when the murder of Paul I. was planned, (supposing intelligence to have been received, that the authors of the plot were at a league from the frontier,) would not pains have been taken to arrest them?' The answer to this home question, is an attempt to draw a flimsy veil of sickly sensibility over that event, as painful to the feelings of the Emperor. Why so? Louis XVIII. is not so squeamish in his

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recollections. He writes on the reverse of the medals of Louis XVI. 'Remember and avenge!'—He has instituted an anniversary of the 21st January, to create a sort of religious horror and dumb amazement in the minds of the people, at the dreadful catastrophe!—F. P. considers the death of the Duke d'Enghein as one of the most atrocious deeds in history. I do not conceive it upon a par, for instance, with the murder of Paul I., and for this reason, that if the magnanimous Paul, apprised of the intention to assassinate him, had sent in time and had the persons who were in the conspiracy against him assassinated by a mere *coup-de-main*, I should have thought this act of self-defence a much less heinous crime than the premeditated assassination. Or, if they had been brought to a regular trial, I should not have called it a murder; neither in this case would your Correspondent F. P.

I should have been at a loss to account for your Correspondent's gratuitous tenaciousness on this subject, if he had not himself let me into the secret. 'I care not a straw whether the tyranny I reprobate pretend to derive its title from the skies, or draw its origin visibly from the earth—*except indeed that I rather dislike the more the misconduct of Governments of admitted popular extraction, inasmuch [as] thereby the true source of all legitimate authority (according to my notions and principles) is disparaged.*' I know this class of political marplots well. Sir John Cox Hippenley is at the head of the species. They take all the pains they can to ruin the cause they espouse; and eagerly side against themselves to shew their candour and fair dealing. We may well say to them, 'Why did you come between? I was hurt under your arm!' Instead of an anxiety about the cause of general liberty or popular government, they are anxious only about their own character, and to save appearances. When the whole weight is thrown into the opposite scale, they would bestride the balance. Or rather, the vices of the old governments make F. P. *doubly condemn the new*; that is, he would throw all the blame on the popular side of the question, 'in order that the true source of all legitimate authority may not be disparaged!' This is every thing but common sense.

I am glad that I have given your Correspondent an opportunity of freeing himself from a suspicion of any thing like courtly servility, by the hazardous declaration he has made respecting Charles I. I confess, I think his *martyrdom* was one of the greatest pieces of justice ever done to human nature. Charles as a private gentleman was an amiable and interesting character, or at least Vandyke's pictures of him make us think so. But it was not the private gentleman, it was the bigotted despot, at whom that noble and immortal blow was struck. In him that monstrous fiction, the *jure divino* doctrine, first tottered and fell headless to the ground:—that detestable doctrine, which would, of

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right and with all the sanctions of morality and religion, sacrifice the blood of millions to the least of its caprices; which would make the rights, the happiness and liberty of nations dependent on the will of some of the lowest and vilest of the species; which rears its bloated, hideous form to brave the will of a whole people; that claims mankind as its property, and allows human nature to exist only upon sufferance; that haunts the understanding like a frightful spectre, and oppresses the very air with a weight that is not to be borne.—We English, who first struck and brought down this monster, have restored it in France and Spain. We shall see with what success. If it lasts there, it will, some time or other, return here. The old, deep, festering wounds will heal again. The Editor of the *Times* asks, 'Where is the madman who believes this doctrine?' He is that madman. Why, it is the only idea he has in his head. If that doctrine is true, then all his reasoning is good, sound and true. If it is not true, then the whole of the *Times* newspaper is one enormous lie from top to bottom.<sup>1</sup>

PETER PICKTHANK.

### THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN. III

*The Examiner.*

November 19, 1815.

SIR,—Your Correspondent 'Fair Play' concludes his last letter by saying that 'he has done with me.' As he pleases. This controversy was not of my seeking. He speaks of the *flippant personalities* in my answers to him. If there are any such, he may attribute them to a certain air of assumption in his first letter, which however I cannot complain of in his latter ones. He also observes, that to the infinite entertainment of his friends I imagine him to have 'a fellow-feeling with the Editors of the *Times* and the *Courier*.' I do not wonder that F. P.'s friends are amused at the situation into which he has brought himself, according to the old adage.<sup>2</sup> They are however mistaken. I never supposed him to have a fellow-feeling with those 'sorry scribes;' but merely to be the dupe of their scurrility, and to play

<sup>1</sup> I wonder some one does not quash this paper; it would be a very easy matter. I read about four sentences in it the other day, and I found the following absurdities. First, the writer asserts that the royalists are the true constitutionalists. He might as well say that the royalists and the republicans are the same. Then he is for consolidating the past with the present institutions of France—that is, liberty with slavery, feudal rights with the abolition of them, tithes with no tithes. Farther, he would connect France with all that has constituted its renown for so many ages of glory: yet he says, it is ridiculous to suppose that there are people who would go back to the age of Louis xv.; and yet he himself would go back to the age of Louis xvi., which is the same thing.

<sup>2</sup> 'There is something in the misfortunes of our best friends which does not displease us.'

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the game into their hands without knowing it. He lowers the tone of their unprincipled abuse, and qualifies it with purity and morality, to make it pass current with men of scrupulous minds. They have their separate cues; and 'one cries *Mum*, while t'other cries *Budget*.' Your moderate Oppositionist is your true Court-gull.

F. P. objects to my digressions and prolixity. I will for once try to imitate the directness of his style, and affirm, that to call the execution of the Duke d'Enghien a murder, is, according to the common meaning which the term murder conveys, a falsehood, and to call those who tried, convicted and condemned him, according to the law, for a violation of the law, murderers, is an attempt to justify falsehood by calumny; and I shall hold that affirmation to be good until the assertions of libellers shall be deemed sound evidence, and until it can be proved too, that the admitted popular extraction of a government can so alter the nature of law and justice as to take away from every such government the possibility of defending itself against the most perilous and manifest conspiracies, according to established forms and usages, without rendering itself liable to a charge of murder, on the face of the proceeding, from the zealous friends of governments of admitted popular extraction. 'Defend me from my friends, and I will defend myself from my enemies,' is a very old saying, and as true as ever. Your Correspondent talks something about the principles of eternal justice, and puts it into capitals, like a transparency. One of these principles in my mind is the right of self-defence, by the best means the circumstances of the case admit of. Or does he confine the principles of eternal justice to the English trial by jury? I have nothing to say to that. Does he mean that all military law is vicious and tyrannical; that all military executions are murders? If a spy is hanged summarily, is it therefore a murder? <sup>1</sup> The Duke d'Enghien was an old offender—a known traitor and spy, if not an accomplice with assassins. He was found lurking about the premises, and others of the gang had got into the house. Plots and conspiracies (to say nothing of assassination, which is a more obnoxious word) were going on, it is not denied; the Duke was in immediate connection with the friends and near relatives of the conspirators; Drake, the British

<sup>1</sup> Were the two brothers Faucher murdered because they were tried by a military commission? Was Porlier murdered because he was condemned by a military commission? Why does not 'Fair Play' raise a cry of murder in this case? Or why does not our Laureat write an elegy on the death of the Spanish Patriot, or put Ferdinand VII. into the *Quarterly Review*, as 'being no better than a housebreaker or a reformer,' for putting his pet lamb, Spanish liberty, into the Royal and Christian pound of the Inquisition? Or does our Laureat lament, with the Editor of the *Times*, the fate of this unsuccessful resistance to a legitimate and allied Monarch? Or does he, with the more consistent Editor of the *Sun*, who looks on all Monarchs alike, the evil and the good, regard it as treason against the lawful Sovereign of Spain?

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Envoy, took the lead in these plots; Lord Hawkesbury justified them; and are we to suppose that the Duke d'Enghien, the gallant, the honourable, the Royal Duke, who had so much a nearer interest in those proceedings, and who was close on the spot, the only hopes of 'the effete and effeminate race of the Bourbons,' the only man of whom Bonaparte was afraid, was asleep all this while? Oh no, no, no! F. P. considers the circumstances of the wife and brother of Lajollais being arrested in company with the Duke, &c. as 'shallow presumptions' against him. I should call them shrewd ones. He says, it is absurd in me to call upon him to prove a negative; *viz.* the Duke's innocence. I only want to know how he comes at the knowledge of that negative, since he asserts it so positively and also why I am to take his word, who professes to know nothing of the matter, against the formal allegations and proceedings of a government, who in general knew something of what they were about, and (which must conciliate the favour of F. P.) were of admitted popular extraction? The cry raised by the enemies of popular government against this act of a popular government is as false as it is malicious: but if it were true, why should F. P., in his partiality to popular government, join the cry, which is in all conscience loud and long enough, without his yelping? He should rather 'match the speechless horror of the time' by some equal enormity of the old governments, which might a little relieve the exclusive odium which the friends of divine right, who are not so candid as 'Fair Play,' endeavour to heap upon his favourite cause. In politics as in other things, there is a division of labour. I have endeavoured to try the merits of this case by parity of reasoning on others, supposed or actual. This appeal to parallel cases, F. P. thinks foreign to the purpose. He insists upon trying it upon its own merits, that is, upon his own assumption of the question, and the repetition of the nicknames, which he has borrowed from the *Times* and the *Courier*. Like Dr. Mayo, 'he is always taking a return post-chaise in the argument.'

Lastly, Sir, I object to the signature of 'Fair Play,' which your Correspondent has assumed. There is no such character nor no such thing. He might as well have given himself out as 'Henry Pimpernell, or Old John Naps of Greece, or twenty more such names as never were and no man ever saw.' Whoever supposes himself to be free from all bias or prejudice in questions of this kind is deficient in self-knowledge; as he who supposes that mere abstract reason, without passion or prejudice, can ever be a match for strong passion and inveterate prejudice with all the aids of venal sophistry to boot, must be ignorant of human affairs and human nature. Mr. Horne Tooke used to say, that 'he loved the King according to law.' This

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kind of loyalty would not recommend him at Court : it did not even keep him out of a gaol. The cool, calculating, moderate patriotism which your Correspondent professes, will do very well to keep him on the safe side in opposition—from becoming obnoxious to persons of literal understandings and weak nerves, but it will not prevent him from being made a handle of by those who have the power and the will to go all lengths on the other side of the question, and who will be sure to convert his concessions of speculative and partial right into the means of practical and universal wrong. The cobwebs that entangle him will not stop them. The tide of corruption and oppression will not be stemmed by pretty speeches about purity and morality. The love of freedom is no match for the love of power, because the one is urged on by passion, while the other is in general the cold dictate of the understanding. With this natural disadvantage on the side of liberty, I know what I have to expect from those persons who pique themselves on an extreme scrupulousness in the cause of the people. I find none of this scrupulousness in the friends of despotism : *they* are in earnest, the others are not. Such persons, while they remain in the minority, are scrupulous in the extreme, because their love of a general principle is not strong enough to make them incur popular odium or risk their private interest. It would be well if they stopped here. But these gentlemen are apt to change, and when they get once into the beaten track, they shake off their scruples with their party. They are as impudent on the profitable side of the question as they were cautious on the losing. That which before made them cowards, now makes them bold. It is wonderful how soon they find themselves at home in their new character ; with what leering satisfaction they receive the visits of their kind keepers, and insult their old acquaintance in public. A clandestine Court smile melts their rigid morality, like butter in the sun. Their venality is as shameless as their virtue was difficult. Incapable, from the natural poverty and narrowness of their understandings, of arriving at any general principle or generous sentiment, their malice and cunning, left to themselves, have a wider field to work in ; and it is only by becoming apostates, that they cease to be hypocrites. Some of these persons last year took the lease of a little huckster's shop to dispose of cheap pennyworths of liberty, moderation, and magnanimity, under the patronage of the Emperor Alexander, and still keep their motto over the door, and fob off their customers with damaged goods and false wares, relics of feudal tyranny, the trumpery of the ancient *régime*, san benitos and holy water, with flattering likenesses of the Pope, the Jesuits, and the Inquisition, and caricatures of Lord Wellington, which, like all the rest, make him look like a fool. They are the

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persons who could not tolerate the abuses of power in a popular government, from scruples of conscience, though they approved the principle, and who swallow down the enormous abuses of a despotic government, principles and all, without the least scruple; who could not stomach the informality of putting down the power of the Pope and the Inquisition, but lick their lips at a Protestant massacre; who set up for defenders of abstract right and strict justice in all cases whatever, and who defend the greatest, the most deliberate, and the most detestable insult, as well as outrage, that ever was successfully offered to the rights of nations, or the liberties of mankind. 'It is hypocrisy against the Devil.' They remind one of the delicate gentlewoman in the Arabian Nights, who nibbled her grains of rice on the point of a pin, but preyed on human carcases.

PETER PICKTHANK.

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN. IV.

### RECAPITULATION

*The Examiner.*

December 10, 1815.

SIR,—There is an account in Rabelais of some place that Pantagruel and his companions came to, where the inhabitants flocked around to beg them for God's sake to bestow on them some dozen good dry blows with a cudgel; and when their request had been complied with, they begged to have the discipline repeated. Your Correspondent, 'Fair Play,' must belong to this sect of patient philosophers. Not satisfied with the hard treatment he has already undergone, he insists on my bringing 'new evidence' against him, or 'he has done with me.' He had quite enough to do with the old, for he never answered it. If you please, Sir, we will go over it once more, and so have done with it.

STATEMENTS BY MR. PICKTHANK, WITH MR. FAIR PLAY'S ANSWERS

1. That the Duke d'Engbien was not murdered.

ANSWER. *Most profligate doctrine.*

2. For by murder must be meant one of two things, either the taking away a man's life by force, without trial or the forms of law, (which is by much its most general and obvious meaning, that which fastens on the imagination, and answers the purpose of politicians) or else the making use of the forms of law to take away the life of an innocent person.

NO ANSWER.

3. The Duke d'Engbien was not murdered in the first sense, that is,



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by mere force, or contrary to law and without trial, though this is the impression which the general and unqualified accusation of murder inevitably makes upon the mind and leaves there.

ANSWER. *A description of a wood by torch-light.*

4. He was not murdered in the second sense of the term, that is, by means of the law, for acts of which, according to the law, he was innocent. For he was tried, condemned, and executed, according to the laws of his country, on distinct charges regularly preferred against him, of several of which it is not even pretended that he was not guilty, and of all of which (if we except the last out of mere personal delicacy to the gallant and honourable Duke) there is every probability from circumstances that he was guilty, but for all or any of which his life was forfeited to the laws of the Republic.

ANSWER. *A pretty way truly of defending a murder, to bring the allegations of the murderers themselves as evidence in their favour.*

5. He was tried by a military commission regularly appointed, whose names are given in the French official document, on six several charges of treason and conspiracy against the French Government, of every one of which, after the evidence had been gone through, and he had been heard in his defence, he was found guilty, according to two articles of the military and civil code of the years 1792 and 1795, and sentenced to be shot.

ANSWER. *Fine proof truly, when the assassination is to be defended by the assassins themselves, a set of Bonaparte's creatures—a junto of wretches, slaves, and cowards.*

REPLY BY P. P. The tribunal which tried the Duke d'Enghien was a military commission and not a civil one. Were they therefore a junto of assassins? They proceeded against the Duke according to the laws of France, and not according to F. P.'s notions. Was it therefore a murder? They were not Royalists, or in the pay of the English. Were they therefore a set of Bonaparte's creatures? They did not probably wish the Duke d'Enghien to bring twelve hundred thousand foreign bayonets to restore divine right amongst them, with the good old times of St. Bartholomew. Were they therefore slaves and cowards?

6. The Duke d'Enghien is so far from having been murdered on false pretences, that the three first charges against him of having borne arms and conspired against the French Republic, and of having been in the pay and correspondence of her enemies, of which he was found guilty, and which were death by the laws of France and of all other countries, were matters of public notoriety, which no one pretends to deny, and to prove which against him it was only necessary to identify his person.

ANSWER. *I grant that in different circumstances and in a different*

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*manner he might have been tried and condemned as a traitor to his country.*

7. The three remaining charges against the Duke, of being at the time he was arrested actively employed in conspiring against the French Government, and of being leagued with its enemies (if we except for the present the individual charge of assassination) are so far from being disproved in any way, direct or indirect, that there is every presumption in favour of the justice of the allegations and proceedings of the French Government, as well from his former acts and known character, as from his immediate situation and connections at the time, and from what was carrying on in the interior. Before 'Fair Play' can bring a charge of murder against those who condemned the Duke d'Enghien, he must shew either from his own knowledge or from collateral evidence the utter improbability of the truth of the allegations against the Duke, inasmuch that the persons themselves must have known that they were false.

ANSWER. *F. P. not bound to prove a negative, but able to assert it.*

8. I have relieved F. P. from the burden of proving his negative, *viz.* the Duke's innocence, by shewing, that instead of there being any proof in his favour, every collateral circumstance contained the strongest presumption of his guilt. 1. The Duke was lurking on the frontier in the centre of the English conspiracy. 2. He was surrounded by a horde of French Royalist banditti, who had been implicated in former schemes of treason and assassination, or were the nearest friends and relatives of those who were at that time plotting the destruction of the French Government and the life of the First Consul in the capital; the wife and brother of Lajollais, &c. being at Ettenheim with the Duke in his retirement, while there was another set of these creatures busy at Offenbourg. 3. The English Minister, Drake, was straining every nerve, writing letters to Mehee de la Touche, to shew, that 'so that the beast (Bonaparte) was brought down, it was no matter how,' he was ignominiously dismissed from the Court of Bavaria, where he was Envoy, for his conduct, and received the compliments of Lord Liverpool upon it: all hands were at work, a crisis was expected, a blow was to be struck in concert by Georges, Pichegru, and Moreau, the virtuous Moreau, whom Bonaparte let escape, and who returned from the wilds of America to the wilds of Russia to shew his love for his country, by taking part with its enemies; and yet in the midst of all this we are called upon to believe, as a self-evident truth, what would be next to a miracle, if it were true, that the Duke d'Enghien knew nothing of the matter. The evidence against him on these points was not published, neither was the evidence on the first charges published, of which there could be no doubt. It is to be recollected also that the execution of the Duke d'Enghien took place before the trials of the

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other conspirators, Pichegru, Georges, &c. and that this might be a very sufficient reason for not publishing the evidence relating to the share of the Duke d'Enghien in the general conspiracy. Talleyrand says, in his note to the Russian Minister, that the evidence was *terrible*; from which F. P. concludes that of course there was none. The Elector of Baden expressly states, that the circumstances were such as to justify Bonaparte; and the Emperor Alexander, who was just then hatching a new war with Bonaparte, does not once, in the long and acrimonious official correspondence which passed on the subject, so much as hint a doubt of the truth of the charges, but solely objects to the violation of neutral territory.

ANSWER. *Shallow presumptions! Drake's conspiracy nothing to the purpose.*

REPLY BY P. P. And pray, Mr. 'Fair Play,' let me beseech your candour and moderation to tell us, whether, if it had been proved that Drake's conspiracy was a vile calumny, that the English Ministers knew nothing of it, that Pichegru, Georges, &c. were never landed from this country in France by the *murdered* Captain Wright, to carry on plots, &c. against the French Government and its Chief; that the Duke d'Enghien was not in the remotest way connected with these persons, their agents, or any others like them; that the wife and brother of Lajollais were not with him; that he was not settled near the French frontier, but at a great distance from it, or merely passing by; that he had never approached it with hostile intentions; that he had never done any acts which had forfeited his life to his country; and that Bonaparte had pounced upon him in a time of perfect peace and safety to himself and the Republic, merely to wreak his private pique and blood-thirsty vengeance on an amiable, virtuous, and unoffending individual—Whether these circumstances would or would not have been entirely to the purpose; or whether F. P. might not have thought himself able, in that case, to prove a negative?

9. As to the last point, the implication of the Duke in a conspiracy to assassinate Bonaparte, I have only to repeat that he was found guilty of this charge by those who tried him, on the evidence before them, whose word I would take as soon as F. P.'s on any thing that he knows, and much sooner on what he knows nothing of. Farther, I see no other chance of success to this notable undertaking than personal violence or 'bringing down the beast.' And I see nothing to counteract the presumption, that such a design was known and winked at by the Duke, either in the character or connections of that royal person, in the general sentiments of persons in his situation and rank in life, or in the mild blood which flows in the veins of his august family, which influences the paternal government of Louis XVIII. by whom (as the image of the

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Divinity) evil is only permitted but not done ; and which same gentleness inflames that fair drooping lily, the Heroine of Bourdeaux and the tutelary angel of Nismes, to express her pious indignation, not at a stop being put to the triumphs of loyalty and religion in the South of France, but at the intimation of a wish to put a stop to them by a Catholic Prelate. As to the general repugnance of high characters to descend to dirty means for their own purposes, there is a line of Spenser which ' Fair Play ' should study,—' Entire affection scorneth nicer hands.'

ANSWER. *Not a tittle of evidence against the Duke.*

REPLY. Nor for him.

10. ' Fair Play ' thought proper at first to assert, in contradiction to what had been stated to him, that the Duke was not convicted of the last charge of intention to assassinate. This was a mistake. He said the trial was secret. This was a mistake. He said, no evidence was brought or attempted to be brought. This was a mistake. He said the Duke was arrested at midnight. This was a mistake. His candour has not however led him to make any acknowledgment of these mistakes, nor to say, which I suspect is the case, that till he read the evidence ' at notable length ' from *Cobbett's Register*, and afterwards in the *Annual Register*, he knew nothing of the matter, but the common cant of the *Times* and the *Courier*, or he would never have burnt his fingers with it.

10. The arrest is all that remains, which I have given up, though, if I were as fond of quibbles and commonplace as your Correspondent, I might take my stand on the article of the Treaty of Luneville, and defend it with as much tenaciousness and as much effect as F. P. has stuck to the letter of his first article. But the violation of neutral territory is not murder, nor does it affect the guilt or innocence of the Duke. If he had been delivered up by the Elector of Baden, there would have been no violation of treaty, but the law would have taken its course just the same. As to the generosity or manliness of this seizure, it depends on the extremity of the case. ' Fair Play ' has never answered the question of Talleyrand, whether, if Paul 1. had known that the conspirators against his life were at a league from the frontier, pains would not have been taken to arrest and punish them ? As to the unparalleled atrocity of such an arrest in such circumstances, it is laughable. The danger was manifest and extreme ; plots were forming in France and out of it : Infernal Machines were exploding in all directions : a party was organised, and the Duke was supposed to be at the head of it ; the counter-blow was struck, and it was decisive. From that time no more was heard of these conspiracies ; royal blood was too great a price for putting tricks upon travellers.—That's all.

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

ANSWER. *The next time Mr. P. P. meddles with controversy, I advise him to arm himself with facts, instead of asperities ; but I have done with him.*

II. But what then is to become of Prince Ivan, of the Princess Elizabeth, of Peter III. and Paul I. ? Why does not 'Fair Play,' with a penny trumpet 'striding the blast, blow the horrid deeds in every eye ?' But theirs was royal blood shed royally, or at least it cannot be laid to the door of a Government of popular extraction, so F. P. will have nothing to do with it. What peculiar sympathy has 'Fair Play' with the gallant and honourable Duke ? Has his murdered spirit appeared to him, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, that 'his commandment all alone should live within the book and volume of his brain, unmixed with baser matter ?' No such thing ; but 'Fair Play' is a man of such perfect candour, that he would not for the world be thought not to take part exclusively against his own side of the question. He is so bent on condemning the vices of the old governments, that he throws all the blame upon the vices of the new !

Such, Mr. Examiner, is the account of this affair. The 'asperities' alluded to in the note to my last were not directed against F. P., nor had the whole of the latter part of the article any personal allusion to him. The blow having been baulked of its original aim, and F. P. finding it go over his head, gets upon his legs once more, and struts off with the same air of advice with which he introduced himself. He takes leave of me, by wishing me better principles and a better temper. I despair of either. For my temper is so bad as to be ruffled almost as much by the roasting of a Protestant as by the spoiling of my dinner ; nor have I better hopes of mending my principles, for they have never changed hitherto. With respect to the general reflections I made on party-spirit, and the misapplied candour of those friends of liberty who make all allowances for the opposite side, and find all the fault they can with their own, your Correspondent should have endeavoured to understand before he misrepresented them. He laughs at Sir John Cox Hippley, and yet Sir John himself looks very grave. I repeat once more, if he wants to see Fair Play, let him hold up his pen between the Protestants and Catholics in France, or between the doctrine of *jure divino*, the throats of the French people, and the liberties of mankind, and not between me and M. Chateaubriand ! Let him not go about him with the troublesome imbecility of an insect, fly-blowing his favourite cause out of affection to it.<sup>1</sup>

PETER PICKTHANK.

<sup>1</sup> As 'Fair Play' has thrown out a hint that the case of Captain Wright requires explanation, he will find it amply given in the same number of the *Political Register*, in which the account of the Duke d'Enghien is given, vol. 27, p. 670, or thereabouts.

# THE DISTRESSES OF THE COUNTRY

## SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT ON THE DISTRESSES OF THE COUNTRY

(CONCLUDED)

—'Take physic, pomp;

Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,  
That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,  
And shew the Heavens more just.'—*Lear*.

'Ha! here's three of us are sophisticated. Off, off, you lendings.'—*The same*.

*The Examiner.*

August 25, 1816.

WE see Mr. Coleridge has advertised a Lay-Sermon on the present situation of the country, *addressed to the higher and middle classes*. If he is at any loss for a text to his Lay-Sermon, with the proper mixture of divinity and humanity in it, he cannot do better than take the above two mottos from Shakespeare. They are much at his service.

To proceed to our remedy, which we shall divide, as if we were writing a Lay-Sermon, into four heads. We should propose then, by way of experiment—

I. TO TAKE OFF ONE-FIFTH FROM ALL INCOMES PAID BY THE PUBLIC AMOUNTING TO ABOVE A HUNDRED A YEAR, OR TO TAX ALL SUCH INCOMES ONE-FIFTH. This would take off nearly one-fifth of the load of taxes at once, and relieve in the same proportion the distress which the pressure of that enormous and unequal load occasions to the country. Those who receive the taxes say that they return into the pockets of the people again. There can be no great harm then in letting one-fifth remain there, and we shall thus be sure of it. They say that the people can be no losers by the taxes as long as the money remains in the country. While the money remains in the pockets of the people, it also remains in the country, and we may be quite sure that we shall be no losers by keeping thirteen out of sixty-five millions of taxes that we now pay to the Government in our own hands.

This deduction would include the necessary diminution of the interest of the national debt, namely, about 9 millions out of the 47 millions, now raised in taxes and paid to the fund-holder. It would also include nearly one-fifth of the remaining 18 millions of the

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As I have spoken rather scurvily of Cobbett in another place, as to his taste in poetry, I beg leave here to add, that I consider him as one of the best prose writers in the English language. I should be sorry to quarrel with him, though he is one of Mr. Burke's 'swinish multitude.' He has sturdy hoofs: my only irreconcilable aversion is to a *Car's-paw*.

## SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT ON

permanent peace-establishment, consisting of the civil list, officers of the army and navy, &c. &c. The deduction in this part would be about three millions, which, added to the former nine millions, would be a clear saving to the public of 12 millions a year. It would also include a tax of one-fifth on all tithes, church-livings, &c. which we consider as part of the public revenue appropriated to the public service, namely, the service of religion. The revenue of the Church is somewhere about three millions, and a tax of the proposed one-fifth on all benefices above a hundred a year, would come to half a million sterling. The clergy have been great promoters of the war; they say they have been great gainers by it; that they have preserved their livings by it; the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance of our glorious' Establishment. Let them then pay something extraordinary towards the expences of it. Now is the time for John Reeves's Lives and Fortune Men to come forward. Let them give a part to save the whole. We should be sorry to see the mob put Mr. Burke's *Experimentum crucis* upon them. We should, indeed.—The deduction from the annual weight of taxes on the public is thus far then 12 millions and a half. We should propose,

II. TO STRIKE OFF AT ONCE ALL SINECURES GREAT AND SMALL, ALL USELESS PLACES, AND ALL PENSIONS WHATEVER, NOT PAID FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. The sinecure list in the papers the other day of the 'great Leviathans among the creatures of the Crown, who tumble about their unwieldy bulk in the ocean of royal bounty,' alone amounts to near 300,000*l.* a year. The whole would save half a million yearly; and this half million saved would be equal in effect to all the rest. This half million is the bait by which all 'the creatures of the Crown,' past, present, and to come, are lured, caught, and led by the nose, to follow wherever the Crown pleases. Half a million thus employed is a small sum, but a great evil. For though a small sum to the country, it is a great sum to fifty or a hundred individuals, who govern the country as they please, do with it what they please, turn, wind, cajole, intimidate it as they please, and who are tempted by the stake which they have or hope to have in this which is the price of the blood, the treasure, the liberty, the happiness of their country, and of mankind, to squander all these wantonly, deliberately, knowingly; without compunction, without remorse, with a malicious pleasure, as one other individual (say the Minister for the time being) pleases. This fund is, according to the ingenious Mr. William Ward (political changeling and tame cameleon to Mr. Canning), the fund for 'the reward of honourable ambition;' he should have said, for the extension of corrupt influence, and to reward the desire of being rewarded; it is the bribe held out by the Crown to those who are

## THE DISTRESSES OF THE COUNTRY

willing to serve the Crown at the expence of the people; it is a premium, a douceur, taken out of our pockets to hire a certain number of persons to take all that is left in them for wars, taxes, jobs, monopolies. It is 'the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump.' Ministers would sooner let the people strike off half the national debt than part with their pension list. It is the handle with which they work the machine; the mainspring of their whole system of finance. It is that which enables them to raise sixty-five millions a year in time of peace, and a hundred and twenty millions a year in time of war. They could do nothing without it—grievously unjust or oppressive or extravagant or foolish! To strike at this precious half-million is to strike at the root of the evil, to kill the canker-worm of the state. It would be a saving to the public purse, the greatest saving of public principle. What is three hundred thousand a year, says the *Morning Post*, to an expenditure of sixty or seventy millions? Why truly a mere trifle: but though this trifle is not the millstone round the neck of the people, yet it is not so certain that those who have received it have not contrived to fasten the other sum of sixty or seventy millions, which is a sort of a millstone, round it. The sum of 38,000*l.* a year is not a load to sink a nation; but this sum may be sufficient to lower the public spirit of Lord Arden who receives it; 23,238*l.* may overcome the good-nature of Lord Camden; 23,178*l.* may rouse the pacific temper of the Marquis of Buckingham into an incessant war-cry; 4,000*l.* a year may damp the ardour and be a clog to the vivacity of the Marquis Wellesley, or the same sum annually may be an effectual bar to Lord Grenville's strong inclination to economy and retrenchment. In a word, 300,000*l.* a year paid out of the pockets of the nation to the richest and most powerful men in it, is enough to throw the whole weight of their influence into the scale of the Crown, and wherever the interests of the Crown and the People are opposed, to turn it against the latter; and therefore the money devoted to this purpose should *not* be paid out of the pockets of the people; it should remain in them, and thus we get another half million, or thirteen millions in all, taken from the taxes. We will however compromise the matter thus, and instead of abolishing the pensions and sinecures of these persons who are distinguished by so much disinterested and honourable ambition, we will agree to suspend them only; and if for the next five and twenty years they shew the same ardent love of peace, of liberty, of reform, of economy, and humanity, that they have shewn contempt for all these objects during the last five and twenty years, they shall then resume their claims, and be paid for the time they have lost, in this hard trial of their virtue and patriotism, at full compound interest. When the public pay *the band of gentlemen*



## SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT ON

*pensioners* themselves, they may gain something by them. 'The horse knoweth his owner, and the ox his master's crib!'<sup>1</sup>

Under the same head of absolute retrenchment would come the disbanding of half the standing army, a measure useful in an economical point of view, in a constitutional one, necessary and indispensable. This would be a saving of four or five millions more. 'Send for your army out of France,' says the Common Hall; so say we. 'Pull down the statue of Mr. Pitt;' so say we. 'Tell Lord Wellington that he had no business to impose a king on the French people;' so say we. These are the three best *bon mots* ever uttered in the city, each of them worth a plum at least. Let them talk in this manner, and they will soon talk themselves, us, all the world, right again. But how will the sending for our army out of France lessen the expence of keeping it at home?—By letting each soldier maintain himself at home, instead of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gifford, the Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, is, we understand, the Paymaster of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners. Mr. Southey is one of this Band: he has, we believe, received 200*l.* a-year for the last sixteen years, for going Private Secretary with some Minister to Ireland, and coming back again a few weeks after. This is, we suppose, the reason that Mr. Gifford and Mr. Southey, whose principles were at one time so abhorrent, have come to be as thick as inkle-weavers. 'The bounty of the Crown 'droppeth as the gentle dew of heaven upon the place beneath.' Its influence is not always felt at first; but drop by drop, it softens and wears through the hardest substances. For some years, we know, that the application of this 200*l.* a-year produced no apparent change in Mr. Southey's principles or practice. It might rub and fret against his conscience, but he did not flinch. Still an uneasy sense of obligation might make him more ready to take the first fair opportunity to shew his gratitude. At length there was an opening. The stiff-necked, stubborn-kneed French Rev<sup>o</sup>lutionist, softened, melted, kindled into the Spanish Patriot. Ferdinand was restored to his throne, and Mr. Southey, *for his exertions and his zeal in the cause of Spanish Liberty*, created Poet-Laureate about the same time. Since that time we have heard no more of Spanish liberty. We have indeed heard a good deal of the Spanish Patriots, but not from their old friend, Mr. Southey. Ferdinand some time ago sent a whole batch of these heroes of our Laureate's prose and verse to the galleys. Mr. Southey was as silent as if he was afraid of being sent there himself. Again, we learn that the beloved Ferdinand sent orders the other day to have these same wise and wonderful Patriots (as wise and as wonderful as all other Patriots) taken and thrown into the sea, or put ashore on a desert island. Mr. Southey still says not a word. We wish we could extort an acknowledgment from him without the rack or the thumb-screw. But he at present takes his cue from his friend, Mr. Gifford, the Paymaster of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners, and the electric spark of his patriotic indignation at the outrages of legitimate despotism is damped by coming in constant contact with the proof sheets of the *Quarterly Review*. This subject of Spanish liberty and deliverance is one that we dwell upon with willingness. 'It feeds fat the ancient grudge we owe' to hereditary tyranny and its pitiful tools.—One word more, and we have done. Cannot Mr. Wordsworth contrive to trump up a sonnet or an ode to that pretty little pastoral, patriotic nick-knack, the Thumb-screw? O' my conscience, he ought to write some thing on that subject, or he ought never to write another line but his stamp receipts. Let him stick to the excise and his promotion. The world have had enough of his *simplicity* in poetry and politics.

## THE DISTRESSES OF THE COUNTRY

being maintained by us abroad to thrust the doctrine of the divinity of kings down the throats of foreigners, and, in the end, our own. What right have we to quarter our troops on the French people, to prop up the legitimate throne of Louis xviii. ? The same right that Louis xiv., if he had been able, would have had to dragoon the English nation into submission to slavery and Popery under James ii. ! Let them be sent for home, and have an old cottage and a piece of waste land given them ; they will live well enough upon it, and not burthen the state nor enslave their own or any other country. It is not the economy of this measure that is the question : ‘ The justice of it pleases.’ Where a great wrong has been done, the next best thing is to repair that wrong, and to do it openly. It is consolatory to find that no nation can aggrandise itself with impunity out of injustice—out of the destruction of the peace, liberty, and happiness of others ; but that the evils we inflict on them, in the end, return ‘ full circle home.’ It is necessary above all things that the English nation should come to its senses. Such a measure (and no other) would shew that it has ; and would give us not indeed indemnity for the past, but good, ample, unexceptionable security for the future. For John Bull, honest, wise, loyal, brave, generous, glorious John Bull, to acknowledge himself for once in an error, in a most egregious error, in a villainous error, would be the greatest good that ever happened to him or his neighbours. If the City say the word boldly, the Country will repeat it after them, and not in a whisper. Plain speaking is the order of the day. Things have taken a turn. Hunger admits neither of delays nor disguises.—It might not be amiss,

III. TO TAKE OFF TEN MILLIONS OF INDIRECT AND ORDINARY TAXES ON CONSUMPTION, LABOUR, MANUFACTURES, &c., BY LAYING A TAX OF 10 PER CENT. ON ALL REAL, THAT IS, PERMANENT PROPERTY, ABOVE A HUNDRED A-YEAR. This is a stroke of finance which would please Mr. Vansittart, and the country would not object to it, we assure him. We do not answer for the House of Commons. *Something must be done to relieve the distresses of the country.* How ? By taking off the pressure from those on whom it bears hardest, by relieving the distressed, by easing the shoe where it pinches. Ten millions a year taken from substantial funded and landed property would be an undoubted relief to the distresses of the country, and would add nothing to them, because it could not. It could reduce no one to want, and might relieve millions from want. It would go into the pockets of the consumer, the labourer, and of those who employ their capital in the production of articles of consumption and in finding employment for labour. It could take from no one, except in proportion to the greater wealth it left behind. If it took a hundred a year

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from one man, it would leave him in possession of nine hundred a year. If it took a thousand a year from another, it would leave him in possession of nine thousand a year. It would make to persons of property only the difference of a superfluity or two more or less; it would make to persons without property (who are the only persons liable to distress, who require immediate and indispensable relief,) all the difference between something to eat and nothing. To be sure it is hard upon the rich to lose any of their luxuries, but the times are hard; extreme luxury and extreme and unusual distress cannot coexist together in a community. The times are hard, but who have we to thank for it? Is it not the government men, the men of property, the landed and funded interest, John Reeves's old associates, the lives and fortune men, who have brought us into our present situation? Will they not hold out one of their fingers to help us out of it?—We are not for equalising ranks or property. When all is right on board the vessel of the state, let every one be paid according to his particular claims. But when we are launched into the long-boat and going on the forlorn hope, the captain and passengers must abate some of their pretensions or expect to be thrown overboard. This seems but common sense; it is not one of those metaphysical, theological, and political refinements which we expect to find in Mr. Coleridge's Lay-Sermon. The relief to the country at large by the means here proposed would be about 27 millions yearly, or nearly one half of the expence which at present crushes it down, *viz.*

Deduction from the interest of the debt	£9,000,000
From the government expenses	3,000,000
Taken from the tythes, &c.	500,000
Arising from abolition of sinecures, &c.	500,000
By the disbanding half of the standing army	4,000,000
Tax on real property	10,000,000

£27,000,000

This would be doing something; and this being done, but not one moment sooner, we should have no objection,

IV. To give up as a bonus to the landed proprietor five millions of poor-rates, leaving two or three millions to be raised for the support of the old, infirm, &c. by a direct government tax to that amount on sporting dogs, pleasure and coach-horses, which would besides operate to throw into the market a considerable addition to the means of subsistence, according to Mr. Malthus's system.

There would still be thirty-eight millions of taxes paid to the government. That is a large sum; one would think, a sufficient sum for being governed as we are governed, and to cover the expence of every

## RICH AND POOR

kind of public institution and public service in the most handsome and effectual manner. No such thing: the whole of this sum would still go, and very nearly double that sum actually does go, to pay for nothing but carrying on wars abroad and keeping up a standing army at home, for jobs, sinecures, monopolies, and the interest of the national debt contracted in wars, standing armies, jobs, sinecures, and monopolies. We pay 65 millions a year for our peace establishment, and after having done so, we have to pay for all the expences and all the advantages of civil government in a time of peace, out of our own pockets. We pay our own constables, our own 'nightly-watch;' we pay for erecting our own jails, and for maintaining those who are confined in them, out of the county rates; we pay for building our own bridges, and for constructing our own roads; we pay for the erection of hospitals and houses of industry; we pay the poor-rates, amounting to seven millions, ourselves; we pay for our churches and chapels, parish-beadles, and clergy, ourselves; we pay for our own lawsuits and trials, both costs and fees; not any of these objects stands the government in a sixpence, who lay out all the money they receive in going to war. For this purpose we pay them 65 millions a year, which go up in taxes to the clouds; and return to us again—in speeches from the Throne!

These four propositions of ours, or at least three out of the four, may seem to be jests to some persons; bitter ones, no doubt; like those which passed between the gang of bravos and Young Mirabel, when one of them demanded his watch, another took his sword from him, another changed hats with him, and another tweaked him by the nose, which last he acknowledged to be the best jest of all: but to others they may seem more like the proceeding of Mirabel, when he retorted these jests upon the gang, and took back his watch from one, his sword from another, his hat from a third, and took by the nose the impudent rascal to whose insults he had before been compelled quietly to submit.

## RICH AND POOR

*The Examiner.*

August 25, 1816.

SIR,—One reason that the world does not grow wiser is, that we forget what we have learned. While we are making new discoveries, we neglect old ones. Mr. Burke had certainly read *Gulliver's Travels*, yet in his invidious paradox, that 'if the poor were to cut the throats of the rich, they would not get a meal the more by it,' he seems not to have at all recollected what that very popular Author says on this subject. In the sixth chapter of the *Voyage to the Houyhnhnms*, is the following passage, which may shew that Swift's Toryism did not, like Mr. Burke's Anti-Jacobinism, deprive him of common sense:—

## RICH AND POOR

‘My master was yet wholly at a loss to comprehend what I meant in saying that my countrymen did all these things. Whereupon I was at much pains to describe to him the use of money, the materials it was made of, and the value of the metals; “that when a *Tahoo*<sup>1</sup> had got a great store of this precious substance he was able to purchase whatever he had a mind to, the finest clothing, the noblest houses, great tracts of land, the most costly meats and drinks, and have his choice of the most beautiful females. Therefore, since money alone was able to perform all these feats, our *Tahoos* thought they could never have enough of it; that the rich man enjoyed the fruit of the poor man’s labour, and the latter were a thousand to one in proportion to the former; that the bulk of our people were forced to live miserably, by labouring every day for small wages to make a few live plentifully.” I enlarged myself much on these and many other particulars to the same purpose; but my master was still to seek, and desired I would let him know “What these costly meats were, and how any of us happened to want them?” Whereupon I enumerated as many sorts as came into my head, with the various methods of dressing them, which could not be done without sending vessels by sea to every part of the world, as well for liquors to drink, as for sauces, and innumerable other conveniences. I assured him “That this whole globe of earth must be at least three times gone round before one of our better female *Tahoos* could get her breakfast or a cup to put it in.” He said, “That must needs be a miserable country which cannot furnish food for its own inhabitants.” I replied, “That England (the dear place of my nativity) was computed to produce three times the quantity of food more than its inhabitants are able to consume; but in order to feed the luxury and intemperance of the males and the vanity of the females, we sent away the greatest part of our necessary things to other countries, from whence, in return, we brought the materials of diseases, folly, and vice to spend among ourselves. Hence it follows of necessity that vast numbers of our people are compelled to seek their livelihood by begging, robbing, stealing, cheating, pimping, foreswearing, flattering, suborning, forging, gaming, lying, fawning, hectoring, voting, scribbling, stargazing, poisoning, whoring, canting, libelling, freethinking, and the like occupations. But beside all this, the bulk of our people supported themselves by furnishing the necessities and conveniences of life to the rich and to each other. For instance, when I am at home and dressed as I ought to be, I carry on my body the workmanship of a hundred tradesmen, the building and furniture of my house employ as many more, and five times the number to adorn my wife.”’

<sup>1</sup> An ugly name for mankind.

## A NEW VIEW OF SOCIETY

### A NEW VIEW OF SOCIETY

(CONCLUDED)

*The Examiner.*

September 1, 1816.

\*\*\*\* HERE then the cat is let out of the bag. We all along suspected Mr. Owen of being a little romantic, both as to matters of fact and reasoning. But we still thought and hoped he might have some ground for his assertions. In future, we shall believe no man that makes an appeal to *facts*. In fact, what does this appeal when constantly repeated prove, but that a man mistakes his own opinions for facts, and is so blinded by his zeal for a theory, that he not only gives what colour he pleases to actual objects, but loses all sense of the distinction between what really *is* and what he wishes *to be*? For any one to appeal to mere facts, as establishing a speculative conclusion or system, is a contradiction in terms; for every such system is necessarily made up of a number of inferences more or less remote, difficult, and complicated; and for the partisan of any such system to challenge our assent to it as *a fact*, is only to call upon us to give up the use of our understandings to him, and to proclaim himself either a quack, or a dupe to the quackery of others. This eagerness to prejudge a question by facts, is the more suspicious where the facts appealed to are of a particular nature, and where we must trust, both for their existence, force and application to the case in point, to the testimony of the person who has a system to serve by them. From the moment that we heard Dr. Spurzheim declare that his system was not a theory but a collection of facts, we immediately withdrew our confidence both from him and his theory, and began to entertain doubts, not merely of the paradoxical and extreme inferences he drew from his assumed facts, but of the truth of the facts themselves. So when we found Mr. Owen making such a rout about *facts* of which he was himself the sole judge and witness, and then arguing that the coming of the Millennium was a matter of fact just as certain as the existence of such a place as New Lanark and his Cotton Mills there, we began to demur both to his logic and his facts as equally questionable.

It is not every one who knows what a fact is; and Mr. Owen is not one of the number. This will appear from the passage in his printed letter in which he appeals to the Magistrates and Clergy of New Lanark in support of facts, which they knew nothing about, the whole of which is as fine an example of this species of matter of fact hallucination as we would wish to meet with in confirmation of a theory of our own, *viz.* that your matter of fact people are the greatest visionaries of all others. The *practical* visionary is the only true visionary. It is

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only when he comes to put his schemes in execution that he is obliged to confound the obvious appearances of things to suit them to his purpose, and to believe in his success as he finds it impossible.

‘It is a fact, I will venture to say, which no honest man who has knowledge of the subject will deny, that since I undertook the management of the New Lanark Establishment, it is totally changed in all its arrangements; and the consequences of the changes have been, to produce very important improvements, to ameliorate essentially the situation of the work people, and to carry the general happiness of the population beyond that of any other Cotton Spinning concern in the kingdom. In proof of this statement, relative to the improvement of New Lanark, I appeal to the Magistrates of the Upper Ward of the County, to the Provost, Magistrates, Clergy, and Town of Lanark. I appeal to the whole neighbourhood, and to every stranger who has visited the establishment. And in confirmation of the increased happiness of the population, I appeal to the spontaneous illumination which took place on the night of the day when I re-purchased the mills last year by public sale, and of which intelligence arrived, by mere accident, that evening in the village. I appeal also to the enthusiastic reception from one and all, which I experienced on my return home some days afterwards; and I appeal to the present feelings of the population.’

This is madness, but there is no method in it. Mr. Owen, with his appeals, puts us in mind of a namesake and countryman of his: ‘He can call spirits from the vasty deep.’ But it seems, from A. C.’s letter, ‘they do not come, when he does call for them.’ Is he sure that this illumination was not of his own contriving? ‘His spirits shine through it.’ He is himself an illuminated Missal. But we are tired of nonsense, of Mr. Owen’s and our own; and have only this to say, that whenever Mr. Owen or his friend ‘Z.’ will satisfy us, that all this, which he has said in his own praise, is true, we will then undertake to shew, that all this is nothing to the purpose; or to explain, in a serious article, written expressly for the instruction of Mr. Owen and others like him, what is the true obstacle to the improvement of man, *viz.* man himself.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> We do not think Mr. Owen has succeeded in explaining this point. He observes, in his reply to Gracchus and others,—‘Here are two principles relative to mankind before us, and they are not only distinct from each, but in direct opposition. One of them must be true, and the other false. The certain, direct, and necessary consequences which flow from the one (*that man forms his own character*), are the ignorance, absurdities, and follies, of which every one is now conscious, and which generate poverty, crime, and misery, in all that variety we now experience in the world. If each individual *does* form his own character, then must this state of society *continue* to the end of time. If, on the contrary, *the character of man is formed for him*, then will a very different state of society take place of that which has hitherto prevailed, and which now exists. Then, indeed, a new scene opens to my view, a new state of

## MR. ENSOR'S 'ON THE STATE OF EUROPE'

improvement of man we do not think an impossibility, but we do think it almost the next thing to an impossibility, and not, as Mr. Owen does, a certainty. 'The most learned and dignified men and powerful Potentates in Europe' are against it, and therefore the odds are against it, unless Mr. Owen can bring them over to his side, which he tells us he is likely to do. For he says he claims nothing for himself; but he adds, "I claim much for the *system* under which I act, for those principles which have guided my conduct, which have hitherto enabled a poor, unfriended, uninstructed, insignificant, and worthless individual to pass his fellows in rapid succession, through various gradations in society, and who while opposing all the prejudices of the world, and without one syllable of intended flattery, to the great or little, has been permitted to urge, and with considerable success, the superiority of that system to many of the most learned and dignified men and powerful Potentates in Europe."

"Dear Thomas, didst thou never pop  
Thy head into a tinman's shop,  
There, Thomas, didst thou never see  
('Tis but by way of simile)  
A squirrel spend his useless age  
In jumping round a rolling cage," &c.

We do not say that this simile applies to Mr. Owen; but we cannot help smiling at comparing this passage with the one quoted at the conclusion of A. C.'s letter, his imaginary terrors with his real security.

## MR. ENSOR'S 'ON THE STATE OF EUROPE'<sup>1</sup>

*The Examiner.*

September 29, 1816.

THERE was some years ago a work published with this quaint title, *Concerning the Convention of Cintra*. This work had nothing remarkable in it but the profound egotism of the style, and some lofty abuse of Lord Wellington, who has, we suppose, since made his peace with the

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society bursts at once upon my sight.' This is to us very incomprehensible. If the principle be true that man's character is formed *for* him, then says Mr. Owen an entire change in society is inevitable, and yet he says that this principle and no other has always existed. He traces all the vice and misery in the world to the principle that man forms his own character; and yet he says that this principle never did exist or was possible, that man neither does nor ever did form his own character. To make sense of the passage we must suppose that formerly the one principle prevailed, but that now the direct opposite is to take its turn;—that hitherto unfortunately man has formed his own character, but that in future Mr. Owen will form it for him.

<sup>1</sup> On the State of Europe in January 1816. By George Ensor, Esq. London, Hunter.



## MR. ENSOR'S

author, by making or breaking the Convention of Paris. Recollecting the pains we formerly took to wade through the above-mentioned performance, we were made rather uneasy at Mr. Ensor's elliptical title-page, *On the State of Europe*; only we were less alarmed, as the word 'on' is shorter, and less portentous than the word 'Concerning.' So we read 'on,' and presently found that Mr. Ensor's pamphlet 'On the State of Europe' was as smart and lively, as that 'Concerning the Convention of Cintra' was solemn and heavy. This little work has real stuff in it; and the right sort of stuff. It is full of undeniable facts, and undeniable inferences from them. It is written by an 'Independent Man:' we can say no more for it. It consists of two parts, which, in allusion to Hogarth's two prints, might have been called Before and After. The first discusses affairs up to Bonaparte's return from Elba, and the second after Louis's second return to Paris. We shall devote an article to each of them, as there are some points here stated, and very forcibly stated, which we wish to impress upon our readers. His style is an amusing mixture of *naïveté* and eccentricity. His vivacity would render him extravagant, if his good sense and the number of things he has to say did not prevent it: he is very happy in a classical allusion, in which opinion, we dare say, Lord Castlereagh will bear us out: and he makes a quotation from the Apocrypha or from an obsolete act of parliament with equal gravity and effect. With these various qualifications both for instruction and amusement, we must apprise our readers that Mr. Ensor holds many opinions that were less popular in January 1816 than at present; as, that the restoration of the Bourbons is not so much the triumph of the principles of liberty as of royalty; that Louis and Ferdinand are not the best of kings, nor Lord Wellington the very *moral* of a man; that Bonaparte is not the greatest tyrant nor the worst general in modern times; that it is not true that he broke all his treaties, nor that the Allies kept all theirs; that the present and the late wars did not originate solely in his ambition and love of conquest; and that the different coalitions formed against France, from 1793 to 1815 inclusive, had an eye to what is called the legitimacy of kings full as much as to any other object; he also throws out hints, that those who hold the contrary language are either not very sincere or unprejudiced or well-informed on these subjects, and what is more, he proves that they cannot be so, in manner and form following.

The author sets out very agreeably in some passages, which glance lightly at poets, philosophers, soldiers and kings:—

'Even the flattery of poets, those chartered counterfeits, promotes extravagant pretensions and lawless ambition. When Horace became laureat, the Julium Sidus shone the brightest in the firmament; and

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Augustus, while living, was honoured with vows and altars; many hailed his matchless heroism and Atlantean policy; and as the poet sang, the prince presumed, and the people shouted. Flattery, the attic dialect of courts, the cardinal vice of monarchies, increased in imperial Rome—“A louder yet and yet a louder strain,” and Domitian prefaced his edicts “*Dominus et Deus noster sic fieri jussit.*” All acquiesced in silence or sadness, or in joy and loyalty. Nor were the imperial Romans alone distinguished for this abject admiration; it is by no means peculiar to them, or to any country or profession, though it is most agreeable to mighty captains, as Holofernes, who exclaimed, ‘Who is God but Nabuchodonozor?’

‘Though there are no kings in after ages who have spaces allotted to them in heaven, for the *Georgium Sidus* is only honoured by a philosopher with a King’s name, yet

‘A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown,  
Whose compass is no bigger than thy head.’

‘And though poets are rather more reserved than formerly, yet they are so complimentary as to alarm a thinker in mere prose. Boileau with no Pindaric excuse glorified Louis XIV. till he outraged the King with his adulation; yet he added,—

‘Grand roi, c’est mon défaut, je ne saurois flatter.’

‘Yes, truly, a plain chronicler of matters of fact! like the pensioned rhymers of other countries. In consequence of this improvement, our birth-day odes and loyal effusions recall the memory of the *water-poets*; and as our princes pledge their heralds, they have diluted the proof-spirit of the prerogative royal with promises which they have forgotten to keep, if indeed they ever designed to keep them.

‘Kings now do not claim the rank of Godship, or a kindred with the Gods; some have even renounced the right divine, as an essence concrete in king Adam, and discrete in all the kings of the earth; which, while it promotes the metaphysics of royalty, impairs in no degree the king’s inheritance, as Burke has rhetorically proved. This new right, which is neither divine nor human, has since the restoration of Louis XVIII. obtained a name, that is, a being, as according to Locke a nameless mixed mode is little more than a crotchet of the brain; this right is termed the *legitimacy* of kings.

‘Under this titular regeneration of royal rights, Kings are only reputed the vicegerents of God, the Lord’s anointed, Kings by the grace of God; though with reverence be it said, humanly speaking, some of them should rather substitute for God’s grace, Bonaparte’s mercy. Kings also continue to enjoy super-human attributes; they

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are impeccable, irresponsible; and the dogma that the King can do no wrong, is interpreted by an easy inversion.—That Kings and Princes in their proper persons exhibit the most ingenious egotism, nay, that for actions of no doubtful merit they have assumed much condescension and benevolence,—mark in the amicable courtesy with which a British Sovereign seized Barbadoes. The patent to the Earl of Carlisle in 1627 states, “We also of our princely grace, for us, our heirs and successors, will straightly charge, make, and ordain that the said province be of our allegiance,” &c. When I approach nearer to the legitimacy of Kings, their self-admiration becomes unmitigated. With what exceeding goodness the high contracting powers lopped the extremities of Poland in 1772! to which boon of dismemberment they added in 1792 a second spoliation. Catherine, who transcended her associates in beneficence, arrogated on this occasion superlative virtue. Having distracted the country and mangled its people, she ordered, while they were weltering in their blood, a thanksgiving to be offered in all the churches of Poland for the happiness she conferred on them; and at the same time, addressed to the Poles, even when she meditated the perdition of the name of Poland, a proclamation which she called her *universal*; in this imperial *catholicon* she professed for the Poles “the solicitude of a tender mother, who only wishes for the happiness of her children.” A tender mother! Her deeds countenance Medea’s legend, and add credibility to Herod’s massacre. After this it would be tautology to remind the reader of the *benignity* of Ferdinand’s heart.’

But why of Ferdinand’s heart in particular? What! Is he not a King? And are not all Kings alike—the best of Kings? If there is one King more than another ‘after our own heart,’ it is he. We have heard of a wag who being condoled with on an accident which had happened to one of his legs, said he was sorry for it too, ‘particularly as it was his favourite leg.’ So Ferdinand, as we may say, is our favourite King. ‘Men should be what they seem;’ and Kings should seem what they are. He is a model in his kind. In him is seen the copy of the good old times—what his predecessors were before him, and what they will be after him: what Kings were and will be and ought to be. He is a King every inch of him; he has nothing human about him. He is not affected with the taint of modern philosophy, nor has he in his heart or on his lips any false, spurious, Ultra-Jacobinical notions of liberty, humanity, and justice. He is above all that. He is an honest King. He is a tyrant both by profession and practice. He has but one idea in his head, like the Editor of the *Times*, that a King can do no wrong, and he acts up to it, as the Doctor raves up to it, or as Mr. Coleridge cants up to it, or as Mr. Southey rhymes up to it,

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or as Mr. Wordsworth muses up to it. We do not believe by their significant silence that the other gentlemen have as yet grown jealous of this perfect model of a patriot King. Why then does the Editor of the *Times* find fault with his own great idea when he sees it put in practice? Is he angry with Ferdinand, when he gives him ‘patent to offend,’ that he takes him at his word? What if the College of Doctors’ Commons were to grant a diploma to a learned lawyer, and then refuse to let him practise? Is he for cashiering Kings? Has not his Ultra-Royalism got the better of his Ultra-Jacobinism? Is the deep root which the one had taken in his mind, the reason why the other lifts its aspiring head so high? Is not the self-opinion and the self-will of his original creed ‘subdued to the quality of legitimate Sovereigns?’ Now that Louis XVIII. has offended him too, we think he and Chateaubriand (we ask pardon of our friend Mr. Coleridge for associating any body but himself with Chateaubriand) had better go over together to Ferdinand. Spain is the only place for them; the country of slavery and popery; the country of sound morality and religion, of legitimate kings and loyal subjects! There is only one objection we can think of: Mr. Burke says that ‘the king of England holds his crown in contempt of the will of the people;’ and it is certain that the king of France holds his against the will of the people of France: now, as Ferdinand reigns over ‘the universal Spanish nation’ not in contempt of it, nor against, but in consequence of their good will, this may shock the prejudices of the new school of politics, who think the contempt or resistance of the people essential to the claims of sovereignty and the triumph of legitimacy. The authority of kings to be pure must come from God only, or the Prince Regent, or from them. These pragmatistical personages are very ready, if you would let them, to take upon themselves the office of the great Earl of Warwick. They do not love Kings, but they hate the people, or whatever interferes with their mad desire to domineer over the feelings and understandings of mankind. The busy slaves would tread out the eye of liberty all over the world, as Albany trod out the eyes of Gloucester. ‘Out out, vile jelly!’ We intend shortly to devote a Literary Notice to the Editor of the *Times* newspaper, wherein we shall not ‘carve him as a dish fit for the Gods, but hew him as a carcase fit for hounds.’ But to return.

‘Thus,’ proceeds our author, ‘sovereigns proclaim their own praises, and heaven and earth are forced to respond to their crimes and blasphemy; while a people’s shrinking from intolerable oppression is termed a falling off from duty, and the anxiety of a violated nation to resume its integrity is reprobated as the excess of treachery and rebellion. If the state machine stop under the hand of the chief

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ruler ; if ministers of various pretensions and different countries are tried to no purpose ; and it cannot proceed ; if in this extremity the king forlorn invoke the people, and they, obedient to his call, attempt to repair what has been injured, and reproduce what has been destroyed, the cry is " Anarchy ! " All kings echo the omen, and they coalesce heart and hand for the restoration of a legitimate king and worse government. If a king after twenty-two years of probationary rejection, an inauspicious return, and a base administration, abdicate without having a wrist bared in his defence, the sovereigns of Europe impute the cause and consequence to the vice and levity of the people.' P. 6.

After a comparison between the situation of France at the Revolution, and England in the time of Charles I., we find the following sketch of events, which are never to be forgotten by the lovers of liberty.

' Leopold died, and Francis and a reign of vigour succeeded. The Allies concentrated their forces. On the 25th of July, 1792, the Duke of Brunswick issued his notorious manifesto ; in this he avowed the sentiments of the Allies, and of his army—" that they will inflict on those who shall deserve it the most exemplary and ever-memorable avenging punishments by giving up the city of Paris to military execution, and exposing it to total destruction." With these threats he marched forward, determined to restore the Monarchy of France, with all its pains and penalties, of titles and priests and nobles, and their exemptions.'—' This portentous Manifesto counteracted the intention of the Confederates in every particular. Instead of restoring the Royal Family to absolute dominion, it hastened, if it did not determine their fate. This Proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick confirmed the presumption of the people, that the Royal Family were their greatest enemies. They had lost all confidence in the professions of Louis XVI. after he had attempted to fly to the invaders of his country, and had left on his departure his " protest against all acts performed by him during his captivity." Indeed there was little doubt but Louis *le trop Bon* was as insincere as Charles the Martyr, to any one who did not enjoy Hume's predilections for royalty and the Stuarts. What could the revolutionists expect from Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, who were partitioning Poland, an inoffensive country ? The Manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick alone decided that question, were it otherwise doubtful. There was no alternative. He who has no hope soon becomes fearless, and courage changes to desperation. Pressed by military myriads abroad, with treachery at home, the fortresses unprovided, the army disorganised, what could the people do—what think ? They had no time to think ; they were condemned as rebels, outlaws, and traitors, for their treatment of Louis. Were the King

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dead, they could suffer no more than the most exemplary and ever-memorable punishments.’

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

*The Examiner.*

October 13, 1816.

HERE is some pretty picking ; plenty of savoury morsels for the palates of those to whom the proofs of the infamy of a cause are a bitter consolation for the spectacle of its success, and who can say truly, ‘*Victrix causa Diis placuit, victa Catoni.*’ We shall sum up the *moral* some other time ; at present we will run over the facts and reminiscences, which Mr. Ensor has provided to our hands.

‘Before I quit this subject, let me observe that the example of regicide was not begun by the executioners of Louis xvi. or Charles i. but by a queen on a queen, by Elizabeth on Mary Queen of Scots. Nor was less management and artifice practised by Elizabeth to destroy Mary, than by those who conducted the trials of Charles and Louis. Never was less justice done to woman than by this queen to a sister queen in a foreign land. Hatton, Elizabeth’s confidant, advised Mary to lay aside her bootless privilege of royal dignity. Never was trial so extraordinary ; Mary was trepanned, treated with brutality, and her execution was precipitated by tales of Popish plots, and finally by a rumour that the Spaniards were preparing to land at Milford. The Puritans of England and the Democrats of France did not originate the trial of crowned heads ; they followed at a distance the example prepared for them by one “*who could do no wrong.*”

How is it then that Mr. Walter Scott has declared that the execution of Charles i. was an atrocity unparalleled in history, and that the pensioned sophist, Mr. Burke, discovered that “Confusion had never made his master-piece” till the death of Louis xvi. ? Had the misfortunes of the Scottish Queen no effect on the sympathy of the Northern metre ballad-monger ? Or was her beauty eclipsed in the eyes of our half English, half Irish prose poet, by the meretricious charms of Maria Antoinette ? No such thing. Here is the secret, why the former affair is hushed up, and no Coroner’s Inquest of crowned heads or court-historians ever sat upon it. It is no matter whether the execution of Mary Queen of Scots was a murder or not, whether it was an act of perfidy and injustice or not. It was done by a Queen upon a Queen ; the benefit did not go out of the *firm*. If a King kills a King, why a King gains by it : regicide is among the exclusive privileges of royalty, and the exercise of it is not to be too closely inquired into, because there is no knowing whether it may be the fate of the legitimate

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survivors to avail themselves of it or to suffer by it. If one Sovereign cuts another off by force or fraud, so that power only changes hands, it is all very well; the crown is only *in abeyance*. The system is not touched, the estate is not dilapidated, the reversion of despotism is secure, the right and title of those modest and accomplished persons, who claim the same property in the rest of the species as in their preserves of game or the herds of deer in their parks, is not called in question.<sup>1</sup> But it alters the case with a vengeance, when a nation of thirty millions of men wishing to be free rids itself *perforce* of one of these intolerable and monstrous pretenders; when the people are gainers by his loss; when humanity, justice, liberty, reason, common safety require the sacrifice. This makes it at once the cause of Kings against mankind; this stamps it a regicide, a rebellion, in the true modern obnoxious Anti-jacobin emphatical cant sense of the terms; this makes that a murder which would otherwise have been a refined piece of state-policy; this which makes it a hallowed means of restoring the privileges of humanity to the species, makes it treason against the majesty of Kings; this is the sacrilege, this the sin against the Holy Ghost, the unpardonable aggravation, that "makes mad the guilty and appals the free," that "horror on horror's head accumulates"—*viz.* that by the death of one man, all other men are declared free: it is this that requires to be pursued by absolute Princes and their satellites with eternal vengeance, and for which rivers of blood must flow. This is the cause "of lamentation loud heard on the rueful stream." This is the cause of books written by traitors and enemies to their kind against regicide peace, urging them to wage cannibal wars, "wasting the earth, each other to destroy," and of strict leagues and unheard of concord between those who claim whole nations as their slaves by Divine Right. This is the cause of Kings, and they know it: it is also the cause of the people, if they knew it.—This is a digression, though not from our purpose.

'The trial of Louis xvi. was prepared by those of Charles (of England) and Mary (of Scotland) and the denunciation of the Allies with their confederate forces decided the King's fate. When the Duke of Brunswick published his manifesto, he displayed a flag red with the blood of Polish patriots, whose spirits the reckless partitioners of Poland saw revive in the revolution of France. Thus both parties were exasperated against each other: the Austrian, Russian, and Prussian Sovereigns feared lest their triple folds should be unable to secure their prey, while the French read in the fate of Poland the prognostic of their own doom. If they should escape this catastrophe, they were

<sup>1</sup> Frederic II. in one of his Letters to Voltaire, says, 'I look upon mankind as I do upon deer in a park.'

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apprised of the enmity of the King and of the Nobles ; and many had felt their partiality, caprice, and consuming terrors, before the revolution had aggravated their suspicion and revenge.’—‘ It is repeated, that supposing vices and imperfections had increased during the lapse of time, why were they not moderately reformed ? Does any Briton ask this question, and recollect the fruitless efforts of all the ablest men from William Pitt in 1782, to Sir S. Romilly in the last year, to reform our uncouth code of laws, and the illusory representation of the people of England, by a milder process ? The French Clergy and Nobles would not be reformed : a thousand salutary schemes were proposed, even from the age of Vauban to that of Necker, to ameliorate the Constitution ; yet the Clergy and Nobility rejected them with indignation or disdain, even when they were vagabond through Europe ; and now when they hold after a second return to France a doubtful tenure of their country, they speak and speculate as scornfully as if France were irretrievably the victim of their pride and avarice.’

After a rapid sketch of the history of the Revolution and the failure of the crusades against it, Mr. Ensor comes to its final catastrophe in 1814, and the deliverance of mankind by the Allies and the Congress. He speaks of the performance of their promises to Spain, to Genoa, to Venice, to Saxony, to Poland, to Norway, to the Netherlands,—of every one of their acts and deeds, with the cutting contempt which they deserve. We have not room for particular extracts ; but his statements and remarks deserve to be perused by every one who does not wish to be the dupe of a perpetual league of tyranny and hypocrisy. Of the return of Bonaparte in 1815 he speaks thus, evidently *con amore*, and like an honest man.

‘ Amidst these revelries—when the new era was in complete activity, and Congress had arranged all things for peace which was to be imperturbable for ages—one man landed in the Department of Var, and the political alchemists forfeited all their hopes at the moment of projection. Starvation and the Corn-bill lost their terrors ; Mr. Vansittart lost his jokes ; the Sovereigns and Plenipotentiaries lost their wits, as the Declaration of the Allies, issued at Vienna, fully evinces. What particularly interests in this outlawry *with the benefit of assassination*, and which was signed by eighteen Plenipotentiaries, among whom England counts four sapient names, is the assertion that by appearing again in France with projects of confusion and disorder, Bonaparte has manifested to the universe that there can be neither peace nor truce with him. This last position includes two consequences : that Bonaparte by returning from Elba sinned beyond example, and that he sinned against the Allied Sovereigns, who are the sincerest of men.’—The author then traces the proofs of the good faith of Austria in the



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making and keeping of treaties for the last twenty years. The details are too sickening, too disgusting, too well known for us to go into them all. But there is one passage which we must give, as it places the charge against Bonaparte, of seizing on Italy and incorporating Genoa in time of peace, in its true point of view.

‘This treaty (that of Luneville) it is also said Bonaparte set at defiance; and the Declaration of Austria accused him of assuming the crown of Italy, and incorporating Genoa with France. But observe, that the two acts with which Bonaparte is charged by this Declaration were subsequent to a treaty of concert actually signed between Austria and Russia the 11th of April, which treaty was also posterior to “an official communication made to the Russian Ambassador at London the 19th of January, explanatory of the views which his Majesty and the Emperor of Russia formed *for the deliverance of Europe*.” [Ah, Mr. Southey, Mr. Southey, to what tune were you singing then?] “This scheme must of course have occupied the attention of these Cabinets for some time preparatory to its signature by Ministers. But suppose that it merely originated with the date of the communication, still it preceded the coronation of Bonaparte in Italy, and the incorporation of Genoa with France, nearly six months, for the Doge of Genoa did not offer to Bonaparte the incorporation of his country with France till the 4th of June. These acts reprobated in the declaration did not therefore proceed from his spontaneous ambition; they were imposed on him by the Coalition, of whose proceedings he had been apprised. By these treaties and communications of Russia, England, &c. the Italian Republic was to be disposed of by the Allies, that is, pillaged and destroyed should they be successful against France; while respecting other parts of Italy, this official document pronounced:—“Nor does the past conduct of Genoa, or of any of the other States, give them any claim either to justice or liberality.” It must then be a great consolation to the friends of freedom that Venice and Genoa were foredoomed to political extinction twenty years ago by *our great minister*. Yet there is little doubt that this profound villainy actually gave Bonaparte a mastery over the Italian republic and Genoa:—this induced the union of Genoa with France, the perversion of the Italian republic into a kingdom, and the general hostilities which ensued.’—Yet we have heard this transfer, meditated by our gracious Sovereign and his Allies, dunned in our ears a hundred times as the consummation of deliberate treachery in Bonaparte; and it was, we dare say, one of the profound reasons which provoked the Duke of Wellington, with singular modesty and wisdom, to call the French Emperor ‘the enemy of the human race.’ Give to legitimate sovereigns ‘the right to do wrong,’ and to their scribbling

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parasites the privilege to tell lies for truth in their defence, and they have all that they want.

Mr. Ensor goes through the whole royal rubric, Prussia, Russia, &c., with the same laudable industry. They are just of a kidney. The conduct of Frederick and Alexander to France is a tissue of exemplifications of that principle by which the legitimate have a right to regulate their conduct to the illegitimate, as the true believers are not bound to keep faith with heretics.

On the expertness of Louis in the art of evading his promises Mr. Ensor is very edifying; he cuts up Lord Wellington's Dilettanti Letter on the removal of the works of Art, which he proves to be sheer nonsense at every sentence: does not spare his *legal* construction of a military Convention; and is even sceptical as to his Grace's wonder-working faculties at the battle of Waterloo, as appears by the following passage:—

‘ Lord Liverpool stated in the House of Lords, in reply to the Marquis of Wellesley, April 27th, that “ we did not go to war for the restoration of Louis xviii. and that no attempt should be made to dictate a government to the French nation.” How’ (asks Mr. Ensor, with much simplicity,) ‘ how has this been fulfilled? Immediately after the battle of Waterloo, and the advance of the Allies into France, the Duke of Wellington seized Cambrai in the name of Louis xviii. And here let me say, that the tale of the battle of Waterloo, or, according to its sentimental designation, *La Belle Alliance*, is not the least among the extravagancies of this tremendous romance. The simple fact is, 130,000 French troops having gained a decisive victory on the 16th of June, were defeated by 200,000 on the 18th. Glory heretofore was only attained by performing great deeds by inconsiderable means; now the wonder is, that 200,000 troops, the advanced body of a million of soldiers, discomfited 130,000 men.’

In the official account published by Blucher, he states that on the 16th, at Ligny, his three corps amounted to 80,000; to this Bulow, or the fourth corps, was added on the 18th at Waterloo, where 130,000 French were engaged with the British, Hanoverians, &c. who were, according to Blucher, 80,000 strong. This makes the contending forces on that day—Allies, about 200,000 against 130,000 French.

Our Poet-laureate, who is ‘ a great arithmetician,’ and knows ‘ the order of a battle better than a spinster,’ will not assent to this account, nor to Mr. Ensor's comments on the results. We do to every word of them, though we do not chuse to repeat them after him. But we shall conclude while we are in a whole skin with the following ‘ most true and veritable’ rendering of the Treaty of Paris and application of it to the bosoms and business of Englishmen:—

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'On the signature of their treaty with Louis, the Ministers of the Allies communicated a note to the Duke of Richelieu, in which they felicitate his Most Christian Majesty on the treaty, adding, "the Allied Cabinets regard the stability of the order of things happily re-established in that country as one of the essential bases of a solid and durable tranquillity." Another note followed of the same date (for the 20th of November was truly a day of business), which was also addressed to the Duke de Richelieu, communicating the appointment of the Duke of Wellington to the command of the allied armies in France. As this note is worth all the rest; as it contains a key to volumes of diplomatic mystery, and to endless verbose speeches in Parliament; as it exposes the cause of 23 years war, which occasionally exposed Europe and all the world, with the ruin of many millions of men; I here insert a large extract from this consummate document: "Although chiefly guided with respect to this measure by motives tending to the safety and welfare of their subjects, and being very far from having any intention of employing their troops in aid of the police, or of the internal administration of France, or in any manner that might compromise or interfere with the free exercise of the royal authority in this country; the Allied Sovereigns have, however, IN CONSIDERATION OF THE HIGH INTEREST WHICH THEY TAKE IN SUPPORTING THE POWER OF LEGITIMATE SOVEREIGNS, promised to His Most Christian Majesty, to support him with their arms against every *revolutionary* convulsion which might tend to overthrow *by force* the order of things at present established," &c.

[This note gives the lie to the declaration of Lord Liverpool in the House of Lords, April 27th, 1815, and throws him back on the original principle of his march to Paris in 1793.]

"These legitimate Sovereigns tell the French in effect, our safety depends on your servitude; and the tranquillity of Europe is secured by Louis's commanding you. To the Duke of Wellington they commit Louis and legitimacy with 150,000 troops, which neither go nor stay in France, but halt on the frontiers, just to give Louis a show of empire, while they *speculate* on the French nation; and it is a right noble office for the heroes of Waterloo. The Kings of Europe having forced Louis on the French, leave 150,000 men as representatives (would we were all so represented) of their whole power to confirm the appointment. They set up Louis *long prondy* in the state go-cart, and retire a little in order to see if he can waddle about with his nursery attendants, *les cent Suisses*. The foreign mercenaries quit Paris; but remain just within call, in order that should any convulsion disturb the order of things at present established, they may be at hand. The cry of havoc is first to pass from Louis to the Ambassadors of Russia, Prussia,

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Austria and England, who are to repeat the word, and then the dogs of war are to be unkenelled and the royal hunt begins. In this conspiracy the English are abetting and assisting: it is indeed said triumphantly they are principals. The sons of those Englishmen whose fathers effected the *Revolution*, the most distinguished event in the British annals, league to suppress all revolutionary convulsions among the French people. Their conduct indirectly attaints the transactions of 1688, and all those interested in them, that is, almost the whole British nation; for the English of that period abhorred James the Second not less than Frenchmen do now Louis and the Bourbons. This conduct is at once atrocious and silly: it tends to retrieve the almost lost character of the Jacobites: it advances beyond Mr. Burke's doctrine in his "Appeal from the new to the old Whigs:" in one word, it has accomplished Hume's euthanasy of the British constitution: for, if Britons consent to be a guard in reserve for *le grand monarque* against the freedom of French citizens, absolute monarchy is confirmed among us, the British have abandoned their own liberty; and should they or their descendants reclaim their eternal rights and endeavour to retrieve their condition, the allied kings will again club their prerogative and drive their hundred thousand mercenaries in order to restore despotism in Great Britain. What effect must the present coalition of kings have on the superhuman insolence of monarchs? Their conspiracy against the freedom of Frenchmen is a direct attack on the expiring remains of independence among mankind.'

'Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.'

## A MODERN TORY DELINEATED

*The Examiner.*

October 6, 1816.

A TORY is a blind idolater of old times and long established customs; reveres the wisdom of former ages, and reprobates innovations and improvements; inculcates passive obedience and the divine right of kings in some countries, in others acknowledges the right of the people to dethrone an incompetent or tyrannical monarch and chuse another. A Tory never objects to increasing the power of the Crown, or abridging the liberties of the people, or even calls in question the justice or wisdom of any of the measures of government. Ministers may act with impunity, and break their most solemn promises, and set public opinion at defiance. A Tory may with perfect consistency accept of a situation in administration to act with those whom he had formerly accused of ignorance, incapacity, gross neglect, and disregard of the public interest. A Tory exerts his eloquence to liberate negro slaves, yet constantly

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supports measures which tend to enslave his own countrymen; is averse from Parliamentary Reform, or retrenchment in the public expenditure; considers a large standing army as necessary in time of peace to support the dignity of the Crown, and preserve social order; approves of British troops being employed in the honourable service of bestowing the inexpressible blessings of a legitimate government on an ungrateful people; admires the 'great moral lesson' given to the French nation, in the faithful observance of the Treaty of Paris. A Tory considers sinecure places and pensions as sacred and inviolable, to reduce, or abolish which, would be unjust and dangerous; is of opinion that war is productive of more good than evil, and never enquires into the justice or necessity of commencing hostilities; and accuses those who differ with him on political subjects of being Jacobins, Revolutionists, and enemies to their country. A Tory highly values a long pedigree and ancient families, and despises low-born persons (the newly created nobility excepted); adores coronets, stars, garters, ribbons, crosses, and titles of all sorts, bestowed on all sorts of persons (the estimable and philanthropic discoverer of the means of exterminating a fatal and contagious disease alone excepted!) A Tory hates all dissenters from the Established Church, as fools or knaves and disaffected to government; venerates the beneficed clergy, for their zealous attention to their spiritual duties, their disinterestedness, and liberality, particularly to their curates; is averse to Catholic emancipation, or bettering the condition of the poor Irish, who would be contented and happy, existing in the lowest state of poverty and human degradation, if not instigated by Jacobins and Reformers; and deems martial law the best remedy for discontent. A Tory considers corporal punishment as necessary, mild, and salutary, notwithstanding soldiers and sailors frequently commit suicide to escape from it; asserts that the criminal laws are wise, humane, and just, and would never show mercy to any offender; sees nothing wrong in the conduct of the Police in the metropolis; considers thief-takers as most disinterested and deserving servants of the public; disapproves of the Insolvent Debtor's Bill, which prevents a vindictive creditor from imprisoning an unfortunate debtor for life; sees no hardship in a person's being confined for thirty years in the Fleet Prison, on an allowance of sixpence a day, for contempt of the Court of Chancery; considers the Libel Laws as not sufficiently severe, particularly when the conduct of Princes, Nobility, or Ministers, is called in question,—the greater the truth the greater the libel. A Tory approves of Man-traps and Spring-guns, and killing a Poacher now and then, *in terrorem*: considers breaking pheasants' eggs a most heinous crime, but mixing poison in a liquor that is only drank by the poor and vulgar, a trifling one, especially when committed

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by a gentleman conspicuous for his loyalty. A Tory thinks cruelty to and gross neglect of poor lunatics not a sufficient reason for dismissing eminent medical men from their appointments to public hospitals; condemns any improvement being made in the wretched interior of prisons, lest the poor should be induced to commit crimes in order to gain admittance; stigmatizes philanthropy, feeling, and sympathy for the sufferings of the indigent poor, as cant, affectation, and hypocrisy, and ridicules interfering about chimney sweepers, parish apprentices, &c. A Tory would rather withhold relief from ten deserving objects than give to one imposter; is averse to instructing the poor, lest they should be enabled to think and reason; is of opinion that the poor in general earn too much money, that a spare diet is best adapted to hard labour, and full living to ease and indolence; reprobates the absurdity of peasants and low mechanics becoming authors, and can discern no merit whatever in the works of a Bloomfield or a Burns; is against the diffusion of philosophical knowledge, by public lectures, as productive of self-conceit, scepticism, and opinions dangerous to social order; depreciates modern literature, and reads no poetry but birthday odes and verses in celebration of the battle of Waterloo. A Tory subscribes largely to German sufferers, while his own countrymen are starving at home, and lavishes immense sums on triumphal columns, &c., while the brave men who achieved the victories are pining in want. A Tory execrates the audacity of low-born fellows for presuming to form any opinions on political subjects, and harangue at public meetings to encourage the 'ignorant impatience of the people' at heavy taxation, low wages, and dear bread, and excite a spirit of discontent among the ignorant multitude. A Tory asserts that the present sufferings of the country are the usual and necessary consequence of the transition from war to peace, are merely temporary and trifling, though the gaols are filled with insolvent debtors, and criminals driven to theft by urgent want, the Gazette filled with bankruptcies, agriculture declining, commerce and manufactories nearly at a stand, while thousands are emigrating to foreign countries, whole parishes deserted, the burthen of the poor rates intolerable, and yet insufficient to maintain the increasing number of the poor, and hundreds of once respectable house-holders reduced to the sad necessity of soliciting admission into the receptacles for paupers and vagabonds, and thousands wandering about in search of that employment which it is no longer in the power of the gentleman or farmer to bestow! A Tory compares the situation of the country twenty-four years ago with the present period, and greatly prefers the latter, military glory being more than equivalent to all the distress experienced, which ought to silence all complaints. A Tory approves of the Alien Bill, and would never allow the unfortunate to find an

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asylum in this country. A Tory would never show mercy to a fallen foe, and is much dissatisfied that an Illustrious Character, who trusted the generosity of the British Government in preference to any other, should have been so slightly punished as sending him a prisoner for life to the sterile rock of St. Helena. A Tory considers boundless extravagance in certain persons as noble munificence and public spirit, benefiting the nation, by causing a circulation of money among Court tradesmen and artists; and so deems a tailor's bill, sometimes amounting to more than the annual pay of all the Admirals, Captains, and Lieutenants in the Navy,—a jeweller's, to more than the whole expense of the Expedition to Algiers,—and more money expended on useless furniture, pagodas, mandarins, Chinese lanterns, sphynxes, dragons, monsters, china vases, girandoles, clocks, snuff-boxes, and French frippery, than ten times the amount of the munificent subscription of all the Royal Family and Cabinet Ministers for the relief of the starving poor! A Tory execrated the cruelty of a few ignorant barbarians in putting to death two hundred unoffending Europeans, and approved of inflicting the severest punishment on the Infidels, but was averse from interfering when thousands of Protestants were tortured and massacred in an enlightened and Christian country! A Tory in former times hated the Bourbons as the most inveterate enemies of England, execrated their bad faith, ambition, and tyranny, and despised the French nation for submitting to so vile a Government:—a Tory in these times hails their return to power with rapture, as ensuring good will and liberality towards England, and lasting peace to all the world! A Tory on one side of St. Stephen's sees ignorance, incapacity, knavery, deception, selfishness, arrogance, emptiness, inconsistency, dullness, and folly: on the other side, transcendent talent, great integrity, pure patriotism, extensive information, perfect disinterestedness, extensive philanthropy, commanding eloquence, Attic salt, and fundamental wisdom,—by whose wise counsel and unparalleled exertions, England has attained the summit of glory, restored the Pope, the Jesuits, and the Inquisition,—re-established military, feudal, and ecclesiastical power,—given to the Spanish Patriots their beloved Ferdinand, to the Italian States their adored Francis, to Genoa independence, to Prussia a free Government, to Norway a legitimate Monarch, to France Louis the desired, the just, the enlightened, the humane, the pattern of good faith and liberality, the enemy of oppression, bigotry and superstition, the chosen Sovereign of the French nation, and the friend of the human race!

*Gloucester, October 1, 1816.*

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‘ And of the cannibals that each other eat,  
The Anthropophagi ! ’

*The Examiner.*

December 1, 1816.

THIS paper is a nuisance which ought to be abated ; and we shall here set about it accordingly.

Arndt, the celebrated German metaphysician and metagrabbalist, the author of the *Spirit of the Times*, Arndt, the holy Arndt, the Father of the Union of Virtue, who thought the massacres of Ismael and Warsaw and the projected burning of Paris by the Prussians in 1792 good things, but the entrance of the French into Berlin a sad business, who discovers by some cabalistical calculation of the odds as they are for or against one's-self, that to suffer injury is quite wrong, but to inflict it very proper, this sacred writer, puffed off by our transcendental disciples of the High Dutch School, who have profited by their travels on the banks of the Elbe as Astolpho did by his voyage to the moon,—Arndt, the holy Arndt, finds out that the French Revolution was a bad thing, because it was founded on one faculty, *viz. reason*. Now we do not know how this may be, but we think the *Times* Newspaper is a bad paper, because it is founded on but one idea, and that a wrong one, *viz.* ‘ the right divine of kings to govern wrong.’

This stupid doctrine seems to have said to this learned scribe, ‘ Come, let me clutch thee ; ’ and it has got him fast in its claws, as the Sphinx clasped its victims to its breast !—‘ And there the antic sits, mocking his state and grinning at his pomp,’—dandled on the bel-dame's knee, like the devil by its dam, prim and powdered, her pimp, puppet, darling, and defender, now frantic, now hysterical ; and as her cursed fingers gripe his flesh, grinding his teeth, drawing in his breath, and darting his pen at all those who have escaped the torpedo touch of this old monster. The sense of the loathsome form and rankling malice of the power to which he is enthralled, makes him hate the cause which he has forsaken the more. The name of freedom startles him like an evil conscience ; and shoots across his brain like sudden madness. The thought that all men (himself among the rest) are not born the property of kings, inspires him with a canine rage, a horror amounting to hydrophobia. He is persuaded himself, and would persuade others, that there is but one evil in the world, Liberty, and but one good, Despotism. He would destroy one half the species to make slaves of the rest. On that point his resolution is fixed. *Legitimacy* has turned his brain, and curdled his blood. He has no



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other distinction or sense of any thing in the world left. This word, 'fine word, legitimate,' has swallowed up his faculties, his memory, imagination, understanding, will: it has confounded his senses, his eyes, his ears, his use of speech; it taints his thoughts, it covers him all over like a leprosy; it has eaten into his breast like a cancer; it has coiled a viper round his heart. This word, fine word, indeed, changes the natures and the names of things. Without it, massacres, rapes, murders, conflagrations, famine, whips, chains, dungeons, tortures, treason, infamy, oppression, dance before his haggard eyes in strange and horrid confusion; but where this is, this word legitimate, 'these are most virtuous,'—massacres, rapes, murders, conflagrations, famine, whips, chains, dungeons, tortures, treasons, infamy, oppressions, are nothing to this word *legitimacy*, are things indifferent or glorious with that addition to them, are among the *menus plaisirs* of royalty, are in the gracious order of the dispensations of Providence, are necessary evils, past hope, past cure, are glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and goodwill towards men. All that is legitimate is sacred in the sight of this green-eyed velvet-pawed philosopher; all else is a mockery, a hateful mockery, in his eyes. The claims of humanity, if set up in competition with this nickname, only excite in him scorn and laughter like the hyaena's: its sufferings, pity like the crocodile's, which sheds tears over the victims it cannot betray. There is no inhumanity which he thinks too great to uphold this distinction which sets man and his nature at nought; no falsehood which he is not eager to believe without evidence, to assert with hardened, brutal effrontery, to repeat and propagate in spite of decency and common sense, to defend this greatest of all falsehoods, this blasphemy and lie against human nature; no sophistry to which he will not stoop to palliate and prop up this most odious and despicable of all prejudices; no abuse so foul that he will not pour it reeking and running over from the filthy style of dunghill Billingsgate epithets, which his spite and dulness have raked together, on all those who refuse to set their hands and seals to this most barefaced of all impostures, this idiot sophism, this poor, pettifogging pretext of arbitrary power, this bastard interpretation of divine right,—*Legitimacy*. He would proscribe, banish, imprison, calumniate ignorantly or knowingly, murder by pretended conventions or open force, all those who would prevent him, his posterity, his country, and his kind, from being consigned over in perpetuity into the power of those who claim the species as their slaves by the laws of God and nature; he would exterminate thirty millions of men for not being willing to become the property of one man; for not bowing their necks patiently and thankfully to the doctrine of perpetual slavery by the grace of God; for not hailing

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the crested monster, as it strode on to a twice-forfeited throne through years of devastation and seas of blood, to claim a whole nation as its devoted prey; for not swearing ready, romantic allegiance to a power that had exercised over them an odious, unrelenting, vexatious, degrading tyranny for ages, and threatened to renew it for all time to come; a power from which (whether it derives its authority, according to the old *jure divino* fiction, from God, or according to the modern principle of legitimacy, *not from the people*) there is no appeal but to heaven, and which has no limit but the pride, prejudice, caprice, avarice, lust, folly, and madness of its possessors; that disposes, at its sovereign will and pleasure, of the lives, the limbs, the property, the comforts, the honour, the thoughts, the feelings, the bodies and the minds of men; that tosses their infants on pikes, if it pleases, or rips up the wombs of pregnant women, and if they resist or murmur, it is rebellion; that consigns them to the torture or the flames, at the nod of a priest, and if they resist or murmur, it is rebellion; that sends out its *lettres de cachet* (there were fifteen thousand of these letters issued in the mild reign of Louis xv. alone) in the name of the Holy Trinity, and for the maintenance of religion, morality, liberty, and social order, against any one out of thirty millions of people, who having a handsome wife, sister, or daughter, refuses to resign her to the legitimate embraces of a man of honour and a cavalier; that punishes a look with the galleys, a word with the Bastille, that treats men like dogs, and tells them it has a right from heaven to do so, that brands them as felons respited during pleasure, that assigns them whips and drudgery as a gracious boon, that makes them wear the badge of slavery on their bodies and their minds, that farms out their blood, their sweat, their tears, to its underlings or the best bidder; that deprives them of knowledge, independence, spirit, honour, freedom, of every thing human, and then says they are only fit to be treated as beasts of burthen; that hardly leaves them a rag to their backs, a crust of bread for their mouths, and if they utter a sigh of complaint, or lift up a hand in supplication, it is sedition and rebellion;—or if this power, tamed by opinion and compelled by circumstances, agrees to give up some of its disgraceful privileges, and to own that men are human, if it affects assent to laws which circumscribe its wantonness, and place the lives, the limbs, the liberty, peace and happiness of its subjects beyond the reach of privileged injustice; if it does this solemnly in the face of the world, and then traitorously disclaims it, making a secret league with other continental despots to replace the galling yoke upon the necks of a nation, first feeling itself free, if it threatens their capital with fire and their country with devastation, and as it is clandestinely marching off to

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join this crew of cannibals, this Holy and Triple Alliance, is taken and has its head chopped off, this is treason, rebellion, and regicide; this is an act at which legitimate despotism turns pale, that makes its heart sicken within it, and bakes its thick blood black; that by disarming prejudice of its force, made reason mock, and pride itself shudder at the monstrosity of its pretensions; an act that as it made millions of men free, could only be expiated with the blood of millions of men; pursued from that time to this with unrelenting hatred in the hearts of tyrants and of their servile slaves, with mercenary pens and swords; that has raised a noise and clutter of the wings and beaks of the harpy brood, crying out war and havoc ever since, deafening the ear of clamour; and now that they have restored this monstrous principle after twenty years of a war which never ceased for a moment to have this object and which never for a moment had any other real object but to restore this detestable doctrine, which in England first tottered and fell headless to the ground with the martyred Charles; which we kicked out with his son James, and kicked back twice with two Pretenders to the throne of their ancestors, to make room for 'Brunswick's fated line,' as Mr. Southey calls it; which the French ousted from their soil in 1793, in imitation of us, and a second time in 1815, in imitation of us; this detestable doctrine, which would of right, and with all the sanctions of religion and morality, sacrifice the welfare of the universe to the least of its caprices; which would make the rights, the happiness, the liberty of nations, from the beginning to the end of time, dependant on the pampered will of some of the lowest and vilest of the species; which rears its bloated hideous form to brave the will of a whole people; that claims mankind as its property, and allows human nature to exist only on sufferance; that haunts the understanding like a frightful spectre, and oppresses the very air with a weight that is not to be borne; that arrests the clouds in their progress; that covers the face of nature with a thick veil; that does not leave the human mind one thought, the human heart one feeling that is ours by right, but upon sufferance of those who claim us and all that is ours as the abject gift of God to them and to their heirs for ever; now that they have restored this monstrous fiction (after twenty years of baffled, malignant opposition to human nature, long glorious and triumphant, and still to be so) you see them with their swords and pens still propping up its lethargic, rickety form, that sits squat like a toad or ugly nightmare on the murdered corse of human liberty, stifling a nation's breath, sucking its best blood, smearing it with the cold deadly slime of nineteen years' accumulated impotent hate, polluting the air with the stench of its nostrils, and choking up the source of man's life! And there

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between the dugs of this monster, dripping mingled poison and gore, that lifts its head to Heaven, and devours generations of men as its rightful prey, stands the little pert pragmatical plebeian Editor of the *Times*, one of the common race of men, with his pen in his hand, ready to draw it through the names of his proscribed list of French patriots, who are not ready to offer up their country at the shrine of this lying fiction of legitimacy; or else dandled gently, like Gulliver by Glumdalclitch, in the hand of the Duchess d'Angoulême as she shews him the rose-coloured tapestry with which she is said to have adorned her bedchamber; and as she does him this honour, our little upstart busy mischievous penman vows new vengeance against millions of men who are not like himself infatuated with Popish masses and Protestant massacres; that not the least vestige of the love of liberty or independence should be left in any one heart of that innumerable multitude, breathed from any one bosom, asserted with any tongue, defended with any arm; that a comparatively small number of privileged persons may resume their undisputed right to insult, injure, harass, cheat, persecute, trepan, imprison, buffet, trample upon, and grind to the earth the infinite majority of Frenchmen with impunity, and by the law; that no trace of the Revolution, that blot in the escutcheon of people born to privileges above humanity and above the law, should survive; that the doctrine of divine right and passive obedience, the resistance and rebellion against which, in theory and practice, made the English nation a race of free men, and the Brunswick family a race of kings, may reign triumphant over that vast country, and spread like a pestilence to this; and he calls on his countrymen to seek consolation out of the depths of their misery in the gloating contemplation of this dear-bought degradation and oppression of a neighbouring nation whom they should have helped to have made free, not to oppress and restore to slavery; he calls on them to remember, that it was to effect this catastrophe of human liberty and pave the way for that of their own, that they have shed rivers of blood, wasted mines of wealth, incurred an insupportable national debt, loaded themselves with taxes which they cannot pay, except by resorting once more to a general system of piracy on the high seas; reduced themselves to beggary and ruin, destroyed commerce, manufactures, agriculture, filled the workhouses with paupers, the streets and highways with beggars and half-starved wretches who are ashamed because unused to beg, (crawling above the ground and getting into holes and corners to die, like flies blind, shrunk, and feeble at the end of summer,) brought the people to the brink of famine, and the Government into a state which has but one precedent in modern history, and found, as they deserved, their own

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punishment in the wilful, systematic, besotted destruction of the liberty, the peace and happiness of mankind !

And is it possible that the Writer in the *Times* can be sincere in all this? O yes; as sincere as any man who is an apostate from principle, a sophist by profession, a courtier by accident, and a very head-strong man with very little understanding and no imagination, who believes whatever absurdity he pleases, and works himself up into a passion by calling names, can be. We think his opinions very mischievous, but impute no harm to the man. Some persons think him mad, and others wondrous wise; but he is a mere machine, playing the madman, and trying to be wise. There is not any thing in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out; but the explanation requires more room than we have for it at present.

## SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE GOOD OLD TIMES

BEFORE THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, WHEN KINGS AND PRIESTS  
DID WHAT THEY PLEASSED, BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

‘ Sweet are the uses of Legitimacy.’

*The Examiner.*

April 6, 1817.

THE following particulars are taken from a work in French, the title of which we dare not give. The subject is the pretensions of Louis XVIII. to the throne of France, on the ground of his own merits or those of his ancestors, which are here very scurvily treated as they ought to be. As it is the fashion for some persons to say, and for others to believe, that all crimes and sufferings began with the French Revolution, that till that period there were neither wars, murders, treasons, nor ‘ sudden death;’ neither slavery nor tyranny, neither want nor woe, folly or madness in the world: that the French Revolution was a wanton, deliberate, and villainous plot to wake the world out of ‘ that sweet sleep ’ which it had enjoyed for three thousand years, by thrusting the torch of modern philosophy in its eyes; and that the object of ‘ the late arduous struggle ’ was not at all to restore ‘ the right divine of kings to govern wrong,’ but, on the contrary, to bring back the blessings of peace, plenty, liberty, loyalty, religion, morality, and social order, which had always accompanied the undisputed exercise and tacit acknowledgement of the said Divine Right, it may not be amiss to cast a *coup-d’œil* on the history of the French Monarchy, before it was rudely stopped in its ‘ primrose path of dalliance ’ with the people, and had its mild paternal claims to treat thirty millions of men as its property cut shorter by the head. This right is undoubted in its origin, they tell us: it comes immediately

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from God, says the author of the *Lay Sermon*. It is arbitrary and absolute, but beneficial in its exercise: it has a right theoretically to inflict wrong, but practically it never does so, says the author of *Wat Tyler*. Kings, by the modern revived theory of Legitimacy, have a right, like God, to do what they will, but then they only will to do what they ought: their absolute power is under the absolute direction of equal wisdom and benevolence. They have a right to usurp one another's thrones; but then of course they never do. They have a right to conquer other nations; but then they were never known to do so. They may pillage, massacre, burn, torture, imprison, oppress, starve their own subjects with impunity, and without remorse; but then they never exercise this royal prerogative. They might put an end to the species to-morrow; but then they are kind enough to let it go on, at least for the pleasure of reigning over it. They have in short *plein droit, carte blanche*, to kill and slay, to sack cities, to lay waste provinces, to persecute individuals, to nourish superstition, to gorge their favourites with the fat of the soil, to put little children and old men to the sword, to buy and sell mankind as the property of crowned heads, and hunt the human species as we hunt deer or foxes; but they never do any of these things, they never exercise any of these precious, enviable privileges. The pride of birth, the insolence of power, is softened, and has its rankling poison neutralised in 'the milk of human kindness.' They have a giant's strength, but they use it like a child. They have the power, but with the power they have the munificence of Gods, and rule over this nether world like so many sainted deputies of Providence. Who, but must weep to think that such a happy state of things should ever be disturbed! Who, but must rejoice to see it restored! Let us look at history.

Hugh Capet, in the year 996, succeeded as mayor of the palace, in seizing on the crown of France. This usurper caused Lothaire and Louis v., the two last kings of the Carlovingian race, to be poisoned.—The right claimed by the Bourbons to reign over France in perpetuity, seems therefore to be founded not in the grace of God, but in rebellion and regicide.

After these two poisonings, the only remaining pretender to the throne by collateral succession was Charles of Lorraine, son of Louis the fourth, brother to Lothaire, and uncle of Louis the Fifth. Capet beheaded Charles in Laon. The perfidious Ancelin, the bishop, had him delivered up with his wife and children. Capet took him with his whole family to Orleans, and there threw them into prison. This unfortunate descendant of emperors and kings lived there many years, he and all his family died in the same prison. Capet was not a man

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to leave a single branch of the race of Charlemagne, who might one day appear to call his Divine Right to the throne in question. How happy was it for kings, when, not being accountable to the people for what they did, they could kill one another off incessantly and with impunity ! The reigns of the second branch of the Capets were all dreadfully despotic, with the exception of those of Charles v., Louis xii., and Henry iv.

We find at the outset the excessive dissipation, the atrocious actions, and the inflexible cruelty of Philip-le-Bel, a prince without faith, never satisfied with power nor money, vindictive and bloody, and who violated all the rights of the nation and of individuals, and would have produced a general rebellion against him, had it not been for his death, which happened in 1314. Posterity will always remember with horror the massacre of six thousand Templars in one day, and the unjust division of all their property between the King, the Pope, and the Order of Malta. His son, Louis x., during his short reign, shewed himself the inheritor of his father's avarice. He sacrificed every thing to this passion, and made a common traffic of justice. Nothing could excuse the cold barbarity with which he caused the ignominious death of Enguerrand de Marigny. This 'Image of the Divinity' died in 1316.

Philip the Long did not abandon the arbitrary system of his predecessors; that is, he asserted 'his right divine to govern wrong' to the letter by prostituting the magistracy, continuing the sale of pardons, and levying contributions by his sole authority. This at last threatened to produce an almost general defection; for the fine theory of legitimacy, even in those days, could not altogether stifle the common feelings of humanity when outraged by an unusual stretch of mild paternal sway.

Charles le Bel imitated his father and his brothers in trampling on his people, and perished after a reign of four years, lamented by no one. 'Providence,' says Mezeray, 'would not permit the posterity of him who had harassed France by exactions and violences unheard of till his time, to live the common age of man.' Thus far Mezeray. The horrible punishment of Walter and Philip de Lannoy will for ever dishonour the memory of this Prince; for after having them mutilated by the executioner, they were burnt alive. We would recommend it to Mr. Coleridge to write an article in the *Courier* to prove that being burnt alive is a good thing, and that the objection which we feel to these sort of barbarous punishments, in reading the history of the good old times, is nothing but the cant of Presbyterians and of modern philosophy.

Philip vi., who died in 1350, ungrateful, avaricious, violent, and

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despotic, combined all the vices of the most odious of his predecessors. We find in his disastrous reign the assassination of fourteen Breton and Norman Gentlemen who had come to Paris by the invitation of the King, on the public faith, and were notwithstanding beheaded without any form of justice.

These were 'the gentlemen and men of honour.' They have not degenerated much in our times. The punishment of the Count d'Eu, executed without judgment or process, the confiscation of his goods, shared among the favourites of the King, the detention of the King of Navarre, and the massacre of his faithful adherents, are stains upon the history of John II., who covered France with misery and shame. He commenced his reign by an iniquitous and barbarous act. He caused to be hung<sup>1</sup> one day, and executed the next, during the night, Raoul de Nesle, Constable of France, who was lately returned from the prisons of England. It is necessary to add to all these massacres, those of the two brothers Harcourt, of the Lord of Maubuet, and of Colinet Doublet, whose heads were chopped off without any form of trial. This 'Image of the Divinity' died in 1364. The last six Kings here mentioned did not altogether reign so long as George III.

\* \* \* \* \*

Charles V. passes for one of 'the best of Kings.' He was so. He was also called the Wise, because his father was a fool, and his son a madman. Take the following as an example of pure legitimacy, in its most favourable point of view:—The town of Montpellier complained (what a piece of insolence) that the Officers of the King infringed their rights and privileges: as no redress was afforded to their grievances, the people exasperated rose in rebellion, and twenty-four of the King's Officers were killed. Well, Charles sent the Duke of Berri there with any army. At his approach, the inhabitants and Magistrates presented themselves before him, with ropes round their necks, their clothes rent, with the keys of the city gates, followed by the priests and clergy with the cross, dissolved in tears, and crying *misericordia*! In the midst of this deplorable scene, the Duke passed through the gates, which were left open, found the rest of the people on their knees in the streets; men, women, children, the old and the young, all repeating the heart-rending cry, *misericordia, misericordia*!—a detail which cannot be read in the history, without drawing tears of pity. But the Duke, being one of a mild paternal race, saw the actual scene without being in the least moved: he had a scaffold raised on the spot, and pronounced a sentence by which six hundred of the inhabitants, taken discretionally among the people, were condemned to die; to wit, two hundred to be beheaded, two hundred to be

<sup>1</sup> This must be an *Irisbism*, unless it was a half-hanging.



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hanged, two hundred to be burnt, their children declared infamous, and consigned to perpetual slavery, and their goods confiscated. This Duke of Berri was a very legitimate personage. The name still remains. Once more, how pleasant it is to read of these good old times of religion, morality, and social order ! What a pleasing fervour it excites in the brain, what a zealous wish to realise the tortures of these oppressors of former times by making them change places with their victims ! If all history is a mere fiction, if, as the poet Coleridge insists, all these oppressions were merely *imaginary*, then there could be no harm done by their retaliation, and we suppose that even the stripling bard of the *Wat Tyler*, in his most unmitigated rage against the atrocities of kings, priests and nobles, never wished for any thing more than this. As it used to be said to certain political grumblers, that if they did not like the country, they had better leave it, so we could almost find in our hearts to wish that Mr. Southey, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Wordsworth, Dr. Stoddart, and some others, who affect to hold the present civilised age in such horror, had lived in a more barbarous one. Mr. Southey would thus have escaped from the dread of Joseph Fox and Joseph Lancaster, Mr. Coleridge would not have been shocked by a Reading Public, Mr. Wordsworth would not have been at a loss to know which was the worst character, the Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, Robespierre, or Bonaparte ; Dr. Stoddart would not have been turned out of the *Times* for being too much of a gentleman and a scholar, nor have sent Mr. Cobbett out of the country by the force of his style and an Exchequer process ; but then these gentlemen might have been citizens of Montpellier, and in the number of the 600 who were beheaded, hanged, or burned to death, for complaining of the King's officers. Governments, like poet-laureates, certainly '*grow milder*' as they grow older. Our Government, the other day, instead of six hundred citizens, taken at a venture from the wards of Cripplegate or Farringdon-without, only suspended Cashman and the Habeas Corpus.

The reign of Charles vi. (called *Le Bien Aimé*) was signalised by madness, avarice, ambition, and ferocity. The kingdom was for forty years a prey to the most frightful disorders. In his reign commenced the horrible practice of judging by commissaries, satellites of despotism, who never found any one innocent that the ministers accused. He engaged, against the opinion of his council, in a war with Flanders ; and when he took any towns, he beheaded the governors. He had a brave man hanged whom the Flemings had at their head. He also hanged up before the gates of his palace three hundred of the principal inhabitants of Paris, Rouen, and Orleans, who had ventured to remonstrate against certain taxes.

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Charles VII. had Alexander d'Orleans assassinated for speaking ill of him and his amours. He suffered Gilles de Retz, Marechal of France, accused of witchcraft, and a great number of his domestics, to be burnt alive. Mr. Coleridge wishes to revive a belief in witches and witchcraft, because he thinks the getting rid of that superstition is too great honour to this enlightened age. We suppose he would also recommend the burning of them alive, as the discontinuance of that laudable practice might prove too much for our progress in civilisation and humanity. Charles VII., of whom we were speaking, suffered Joan of Arc, the heroine of Orleans and of Mr. Southey, to whom he owed the preservation of his crown, to perish in the flames, from pure cowardice. Charles VII. was apprised that his son intended to poison him; to prevent which, he famished himself to death. 'Oh, the good old times!' still say we, when there was no talk of Revolution or Reform, and kings were not in fear of being cashiered by the people, but poisoned by their sons and successors—such was the excess of religion, morality, and social order.

We shall conclude this retrospective sketch of Legitimacy and mild paternal sway in our next.

## THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

*The Examiner.*

*April 13 and 20, 1817.*

THE name of Louis XI. is synonymous with all that is treacherous, despotic, and superstitious; a bad son, a bad father, a barbarous brother, an ungrateful master, a dangerous friend, an implacable and perfidious enemy, he made the executioner Tristan his chief favourite and his constant companion. Soon after this prince was seated on the throne of his ancestors, the inhabitants of Rheims rose against the impositions of the excise: he immediately sent thither a great number of hired assassins disguised as merchants and labourers, with a man of the name of Demoui at their head, who seized a hundred of the principal towns-people, and without any form of trial, had them put to death on a scaffold.—This is Legitimacy in its pure state, without any base mixture of modern philosophy! This same Louis XI. had a great number of the inhabitants of Rouen executed, who had been excited to a civil war by his brother. He took and destroyed the city of Liege, which had foolishly trusted to his promises. He marched against Lectoure: the Count d'Armagnac, who occupied it, made a convention; but as soon as he had delivered up the city, it was sacked, and himself murdered. What a pity that Louis XI. had not an English General to make conventions for him, which he might

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then have broken without any breach of kingly faith or this reproach upon him in history ! It may be said of Legitimacy, *Servetur ad imum qualis ab inceptu processirit, et sibi constet !* Louis, the Eleventh of that name, kept in the Bastile (which Mr. Burke softens into the appellation of the King's Castle) Jacques d'Armagnac, Duke of Nemours, one of the principal leaders of the civil war against him. The King was not contented with seeing the head of this unfortunate nobleman roll upon the scaffold, but he displayed in his punishment an excess of barbarity unheard of. Knowing how fond the father was of his children, he had them placed under the scaffold, clothed in white robes, on which the blood of their father fell. They were led from this horrible scene, bathed in tears, and covered all over with the blood from which they received their own. They were afterwards confined in dungeons, made in the form of panniers, pointed at bottom, so that they might have no rest. They were taken out twice a week in order to be scourged. Every three months they drew one or two of their teeth. These cruelties are recorded in the petition which these young princes presented to the States in 1483, the year that Louis died.—Ah ha ! are these ' the good old times,' the ' time-hallowed laws,' which the Poet-laureate, the Lyrical-ballad-monger, and the learned hand in the *Courier*, celebrate with such emphasis ? Ha ! Is it so ? It is even so ! No ; it must be confessed, after all, that Legitimacy has somewhat degenerated since that time. She has been spoiled by philosophy. The Reading Public has laid its hands upon her. Joseph Fox has drawn some of her eye-teeth, and Joseph Lancaster sent her to school. The Beldam cants Humanity and Liberality, and her darling, oracle and prophet, ' the Civil Doctor,' is obliged to set up the *New* in opposition to the *Old Times*.

Charles VIII., a prince without talents and without virtue (how ridiculous it is to make this an objection to an arbitrary sovereign), sacrificed his subjects to the pretensions which the House of Anjou had given him to the throne of Naples. In his reign commenced those fatal wars in Italy, which gave the most terrible blows to French liberty, and even to that of all Europe, by necessitating the expedients of finance, and the illegal and unbounded augmentation of the royal revenues. We here give the words of the French author with due deference to the author of ' The Friend,' who has made the discovery that wars are perfectly innocent things, and that taxes, so far from impoverishing, greatly add to the resources and comforts of the people who pay them.

Louis XII. was one of the three deviations from the right-line of Legitimacy. This prince had some regard for the laws and for his

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people. He reduced the imposts one-half, which, says the silly French historian, was a great relief to the nation.

Under the reign of Francis I. the earth was covered with the blood of French Protestants. The executioners had nothing to do but to burn and mangle the poor wretches, who were guilty of no other crime than having prayed to God in a language which they understood. The priests in those days cried out, like the Lay-Preachers in ours, 'From a theological populace and a popular theology, good Lord deliver us.' They found that it was in vain to argue the matter with the Reformers, or to suppose that 'the healing could come from the weapon that gave the wound,' viz. the pen. So in a case in which 'religion, morality, and social order,' were so imminently concerned as they always are in all monopolies of pelf and power, they resorted to the dagger, the rope, the gag and the stake, as better suited to their purpose. We wonder on which side of the question the *Courier* and the *Quarterly Review* would have been in those days? Where they are now, to be sure. 'Oh, ever strong upon the stronger side!' Or rather, the two gentlemen who figure there at present would have been with the Reformers at five and twenty, and the 'royal fortitude' of Francis I. would not have left them leisure to recant or to retaliate upon their old friends at five and forty. Had the year '94 been removed three centuries back, the Attorney-General of the day would have settled Mr. Southey's business for him, without going into Chancery. *Wat Tyler* would have been thrown into the flames as soon as born, and not have lived to be persecuted by its unnatural parent, as the bastard savage was by his mother, after it had grown up to years of discretion.—Alas, poor Wat!

Francis I. granted to the odious Parliament of Provence troops to guard the execution of nineteen Protestants of Merindol and Cabrieres. These savages, instead of nineteen, massacred six thousand of the inhabitants, without regard to sex or old age or infancy: they reduced thirty villages to ashes.—These are some of the facts that used to excite such a pleasing fervour in the Laureate's youthful brain, and a passing wish to retaliate them on the imaginary oppressors of mankind, though now he has grown as mild as mother's milk, and only breaks out into his old fits of rage against their victims. The unfortunate Vaudois had committed no other crime than that of praying to God in their mother-tongue. This is the interpretation which the French author puts upon the matter. Mr. Coleridge would find out that they were, like Mr. William Smith, 'determined enemies of the Established Church,' if not of the enlightened Parliament of Provence, that had them butchered by thousands out of pure kindness and humanity to these poor deluded people. It is added in our text, that 'this prince,

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Francis I., was a determined enemy of the liberty of the press.' He doubtless thought with the *Quarterly Review*, the dagger or the bayonet a better instrument to trust to than the pen, and that it was 'truly ridiculous to expect that the healing should come from the same weapon as the wound, when the cause of religion, morality, and social order, is at stake.' So he and his parliament massacred them, their women, their old men, and little children, to cure them of 'their potential infidelity and liberal ideas,' and of their propensity to pray *en patois*. But their cries still sound in the ears of humanity; they ride upon the rack of history and roll down upon the tide of time; they, the dead, speak to us, the living, with the voice of warning, amidst the slaving cant of Coleridge, and the pert gossiping of Southey, with shrill eunuch's voice, like the trunkless head of the little child in Jewry: not the gabbling of lying tongues, not the rustling of venal pens, not the squeaking and gibbering of a synagogue of sophists, shall drown the noise; it is louder than the buzzing of all the gnats and insects that infest a court; it is this voice, the voice of outraged humanity, that philosophy, released from the bondage of priestcraft and the schools, has heard and echoed back. Voltaire heard it, Rousseau heard it, Milton heard and gave it back in that noble sonnet to 'our slaughtered Piedmontese brethren'<sup>1</sup>; but Mr. Wordsworth, though he must have heard of the massacres at Nismes, has not yet made them the subject of a sonnet to the King, nor has Mr. Southey whispered the case of the Spanish Patriots in the ear of the Prince Regent!

Henry II. came to the throne by the death of the Dauphin, who was poisoned by the Count de Monte-Coculo. He delivered over his subjects to farmers of the revenue, favourites, and persecutors, and gave the signal of civil and religious wars. He chained the French at the feet of an intriguing woman, the Duchess de Valentinois, a greedy mistress, profiting by the confiscations made on the Protestants, acting as a fury to the King, and continually rousing his barbarity. He sacrificed to a ridiculous passion his honour, his interests, his nation, and his glory. Under his reign they refined in their cruelty against the Protestants; they fastened them by an iron chain, to a beam

<sup>1</sup> Milton lived to be older than the present Poet-laureat, but he did not with increase of years acquire his wisdom, his *mildness*, or his place; nor after defending the death of Charles I. advise his son to tread in his father's steps with royal fortitude. What a pity that Milton did not read the *Courier* and the *Quarterly Review*! He might then have been not only as great a poet as Mr. Coleridge or Mr. Southey was at twenty, but as honest, as wise, and as virtuous, as those gentlemen are at forty. Mr. C., in the *Courier*, observes, that a man who is a fool at forty 'is a fool indeed.' Does not he rather mean, that a man who is *not a knave* at forty is a fool indeed? We will compromise the matter with him so, if he pleases.

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which swung up and down. They then threw them into a cauldron of melted lead, and this infernal machine lifting them up, caused them the most horrible torments,—We like ‘the cant of liberal ideas’ better than this.

Francis II., an imbecile King, reigned for the space of seventeen months. In this short period the extortion and shocking ambition of a Minister exercised the most complete tyranny over France. The King could not pay his debts; the Cardinal de Lorraine forbid, under pain of death, any solicitations for their discharge. He published the most atrocious laws against the Protestants, whose sect had increased by the light of the funeral pile, and under the steel of the torturer. The executions of more than a thousand Protestants, and of the Counsellor Dubourg, gave new courage to the persecuted party. The furious Maugiron entered Valence, bathed the streets with blood, sacked, massacred, without pity or distinction of sex or age, &c.—All this is but the same story over again, or Legitimacy hashed up in different ways with the *sauce piquant* of Popery.

Montelimart proved no less terrible. This infamous Minister established his despotism by the gloomy terrors of persecution. He wished to introduce the Inquisition; the privy council granted it, and the parliaments authorised it: one single good man, the Chancellor De l'Hôpital, opposed it.—How the *Courier* would have set upon him!

Charles IX. came to the crown in 1560, and this infernal monster executed, in childhood, what Caligula had only wished: he meditated with profound darkness the most abominable perfidy: he stained royalty with one of its worst crimes: he exterminated at one blow an hundred thousand Protestants, among whom was one of our greatest men, the Admiral de Coligny, perhaps the only one who had ever laboured sincerely to give us a free constitution. The signal for the massacre was given the 24th of August, 1572, at midnight, on the eve of St. Bartholomew, by the clock of the Palace. The tocsin sounded at Saint Germain-l'Auxerrais; men, women, children, all had their throats cut, the streets were choaked with dead bodies. Nothing was heard but the horrible noise of arms, of horses, of arquebuses, the lamentable cries of the dying, of voices which begged for mercy, and the pitiless howling of the murderers. Many poor wretches fled to the side of the river, and some crossed by swimming and gained the Faubourg St. Germain. The dastardly monarch fired on them with a carbine, from the windows of his palace. This massacre was repeated in all the towns of France. Charles IX., thus marching through gibbets, funeral piles, and a thousand scaffolds, was praised during his life and after his death—and the ministers of religion, and orators, *celebrated his goodness*. The Pope himself made an eulogy on this monster.—

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It is no wonder that Lord Castlereagh, from the grand and comprehensive scale on which he sees all things, and having in his eye this massacre of St. Bartholomew, should have said, 'That in the massacres at Nismes, there were ONLY a thousand people killed!' a mere trifle compared with the examples of religion and loyalty in the good old times, which his Lordship has been so instrumental in restoring.

Henry III., an indolent prince, enslaved by worthless favourites, and sunk in the most shameless libertinism, gave himself up to the perfidious counsels of his mother, who cannot be named without horror; it was she who fomented the divisions of France, made an open commerce of debauchery and treason, and precipitated her son into the abyss. This prince, who had joined in the assassinations of St. Bartholomew, who had wantonly murdered the Duke of Guise and his brother, after having shed the blood of so many of the best men in France, perished by the knife of a monk actuated by fanaticism.

Henry III. teaches us that a Sardanapalus can do as much evil as a Nero.

France revived at last under a king, who was only a private gentleman. Henry IV., formed in the school of adversity, was accustomed to appreciate men, and to keep fair with them, because he had long need of them, and had proved all the vicissitudes of fortune; because he knew and cherished the nation to whom he owed every thing, and because his great soul, capable of gratitude, was not given up to despotism and cupidity.

Still if it were necessary to prove that abuse is always on the side of supreme power, we have only to open the work known under the name of *Code des chasses*, and see the punishments assigned to the husbandmen, who, using the right of nature, drove away the game which destroyed the fields that their sweat had watered. We read there:—*The peasant taken with a gun, near a thicket, shall be driven with a whip all round the place where he had been found till he drops blood.* This odious code seems to show that the good Henry thought more of a barbarous and frivolous pleasure than of the blood and sweat of the cultivator of the soil.

We have an equal right to reproach this Prince with his passion, at the age of *forty-seven*, for the Princess de Condé, a passion which was the cause of a disastrous war with Spain.

The reign of Louis XIII., called *the Just*, was signalised by the destructive proceedings of the sanguinary Richelieu, combining the mischiefs of ministerial and fiscal oppression, and disgracing the nation by terror, and by that insidious and shuffling policy, which became, by way of excellence, *the science of the court*. Wicked, ambitious, he destroyed every thing, and raised nothing but a deceitful reputation,

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exaggerated by adulation, ignorance, and servility, which, unveiled by time and philosophy, devotes, to the execration of patriots and wise men, the parricide oppressor of his country. Immediately after the death of his father, Louis XIII. drove away his minister, Sully : this Prince, without any talents to govern, with a weak mind, bigotted and cruel, abandoned the government to ministers, to the intrigues of the Queen-mother and his favourites. Troubles and insurrections broke out on all sides, and the kingdom was wretched.

Nothing can excuse the assassination of Marshal d'Ancre, and the murder committed, with the forms of justice, on his wife ; outrages proceeding from the condescension of the King to his favourite de Luynes, who coveted the riches of the Marshal.

Mary de Medicis, the Queen-mother, was left by Louis XIII., her son, to perish for want of food at Cologne. She had great faults, without doubt, but she was precipitated from the height of supreme power into the most dreadful misery. This Queen, before so powerful, daughter of Francis of Medicis, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and of Jane of Austria, sister of the Emperor Maximilian, second wife of Henry IV., mother of Louis XIII., of Gaston Duke of Orleans, of Elizabeth Queen of Spain, of Christina Duchess of Savoy, and of Henrietta Queen of England, employed every means and exhausted supplications for a reconciliation with her son in her last moments ; but in vain !—There is certainly a sad want of relief in this historical sketch of Legitimacy.

This King besieged Montrevel ; the town surrendered ; he gave the officers their lives, and hung the soldiers ! A thousand judgments by commission stained the reign of this same Louis the Just. The unhappy Duchalais was also condemned to lose his head, on a declaration of Louvigny, suborned by the Cardinal Minister. The Marshal d'Ornano was imprisoned at Vincennes, and died by poison.

La Rochelle, besieged, would not surrender to an enemy who threatened to put all to the sword : the inhabitants, in order to make the most of their provisions, turned out all useless mouths, women, children and old men, who went towards the besiegers, and were received on the point of the bayonet : many of these unhappy people were massacred while begging a morsel of bread : these deplorable victims withdrew into the fields, between the lines and the town, where they existed on herbs : the King, far from having any pity, ordered them to be shot at, and the besieged were obliged to take them in again.

This unfortunate town was at last reduced, after three years of continued efforts by Richelieu to achieve its ruin, after having expended on it enormous sums, and sacrificed the lives of more than sixty



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thousand soldiers, and after having caused as many of the inhabitants to perish by hunger, fire, and the sword. The streets were choaked with dead bodies—the houses were infected: in a word, the town excited horror and pity in the ferocious soldiers; but not in the King or his Ministers.

We feel indignation against the memory of Richelieu, when we recall the punishment of Urban Grandier, a priest of Loudun, condemned as a sorcerer to perish in the flames.

The sentence of death against Marshal de Marillac, brought before a second commission, because the equity of the first had admitted the proofs of his justification, was another example of Legitimacy. At the death of Montmorency, beheaded in the hôtel-de-ville of Toulouse, the King replied to the Princess of Condé, who with tears begged mercy for him, *He must die*.—How well the family likeness is kept up! These Bourbons always killed in epigrams, in short sentences!

He dictated the decree for the death of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Lavalette. In fine, the execution of Cinq-Mars and of de Thou, beheaded at Lyons, put the finishing stroke to the cruelties of his reign. The unfeeling inhumanity which he shewed at the death of Cinq-Mars, of that young man who had been so dear to him, inspires us with horror and contempt for this tyrant. This Louis the Just was credulous and fanatic; his reign is nothing but a chaos of intrigues, baseness, perfidy, and atrocities, in a court where steel and poison were not spared.

Louis xiv., in the course of a very long reign, finished, by outrages of all kinds, the work of despotism. A proud Sultan, who never knew any other rule but his will, who governed his people by *lettres de cachet*, and transported his subjects to the middle of the sea; who united to the madness of arbitrary power the fury of intolerance; who drove out of the kingdom a hundred thousand families, carrying with them the arts, the manufactures, the riches of France, to distant nations. The North of Germany, an uncivilised country, and yet without industry, held out her arms to these fugitives. A whole suburb in London was peopled with refugee Frenchmen, who dealt in silk. Holland gained some excellent officers and soldiers. The Prince of Orange had whole regiments of refugee Frenchmen. This unhappy proscription dispersed them even to the Cape of Good Hope. In the midst of the cries of Protestants, expiring on the wheel and in the flames, Boileau (the poet) boasted *the clemency and the justice* of this King, worthy of being grand inquisitor of Goa.

He left at his death four thousand five hundred millions of debt. He spent during his reign near twenty thousand millions. He was barbarous, merciless, dissolute, perfidious in his treaties, a bad brother,

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an insensible father, a pitiable egotist, an insolent despot, a fanatical persecutor, an unfit administrator, who sacrificed the natural and incalculable riches of France to ruinous illusions. This is the monarch whom we call *Louis the Great*, whose greatest merit perhaps was, that fortune placed his reign in the most brilliant period of the history of the human mind.

The reign of Louis xv., called *the Well Beloved*, dishonoured him and France for forty years in the eyes of the world. His ministry conducted themselves with meanness and shameless intrigue. A prostitute presided there, and appointed and recalled generals. The gold of the English did in France, under Louis xv., what Louis xiv. had often done in the Parliament of England. The gold of the English corrupted ministers, generals, and above all the unworthy favourite, who sold them the loss of a battle for so many millions. Louis xv. greatly increased the mass of taxes which Louis xiv. levied.

'Thus,' says the French author, 'in going back to *the good old times*, which they are endeavouring at this time to restore to us, we find our history signalised by such numberless desolations, that they seem inherent in our unconstitutional monarchy. Since the epoch, from which we date our chronology with any certainty, out of thirteen hundred and thirty-four years, we hardly find an hundred and twenty during which our kings have been in peace with their neighbours and their subjects.

'If the English Cabinet are surprised that France does not like this restored dynasty, let them then consider that we are in the nineteenth century: let them observe again that this dynasty, so foreign to the nineteenth century, endeavours to surpass the ferocious examples of its most cruel predecessors: in short, let them unroll with affright the horrible picture which our historical records have transmitted to us. They will find there those usurpations and assassinations, which fill the savage times of Clovis and Clothaire, who were only outdone in villainy by Brunehaut and Fredegonde; the intestine broils of feudal administration; the manner in which a conqueror, whom they have canonised, undertook to baptise his subjects of the North; the different quarrels of popes, bishops, and kings, which always ended in blood and proscriptions; the burning of Vitry; the crusades of all kinds; the persecutions of the Jews; the legal murder of the Templars; the unjust and ignominious punishments of young noblemen burnt alive without trial; the funeral piles into which they threw heretics and sorcerers indiscriminately; the quarrels of the Armagnacs and the Burgundians; the massacre of the Albigenses; the inquisition brought into France by a Spanish monk; the frequent treasons which shamefully gave up the finest part of France to the

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English, of which treason alone could have made them masters; the consequences of the madness of one king; the dreadful and impolitic wars in Italy; the arbitrary punishments; the iron cages of a tyrant; the expeditions to Naples, the first of which was signalised by regicide; the massacre of Vassy; the religious wars, conspiracies, divisions; the poisonings brought into fashion by Florentine princesses; the eve of St. Bartholomew; a king assassinating his people in cold blood; the revocation of the edict of Nantes; the dragooning, &c. &c.

‘O sovereigns of the earth! O people of all countries! O wisdom of nations! Twenty-five years of new misery and tears, of innumerable sacrifices, the tides of blood spread over the four quarters of the world, have only then served to bring back to the throne the descendants of a family so famous by its cruelties, and which, in a period of five hundred years, only reckons three kings worthy of governing; in fine, of a family that already marches with giant strides to new and more terrible catastrophes, and which ravishes from posterity that repose and happiness which they have a right to expect from the sovereigns of the present age.

‘To be convinced of this truth, it will be sufficient to observe, that the reign of the Bourbons of our days very nearly approaches to the most sanguinary epochs in the history of their forefathers.

‘After this dreadful conviction, ought they to blame the French who employ every means in their power to free themselves from their *paternal clemency*?

‘We shudder in opening the history of Louis XVIII., called *The Desired*.’ \* \* \* \* \*

—And there we close the book. But whoever after this sketch shall have the face to talk of ‘the good old times,’ of mild paternal sway, and the blessings of Legitimacy, that is, of power restrained only by its own interests, follies, vices, and passions, and therefore necessarily sacrificing to them the rights, liberties, and happiness of nations, we shall pronounce to be either a consummate hypocrite or ‘a fool indeed.’

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*The Examiner.*

April 6, 1817.

SIR,—With every liberal mind, a conscientious attachment to *principle* is still respectable, even although associated with error: with an *illiberal* mind, differences of opinion in politics and religion are objects of malevolent dislike and calumnious reproach; but the worst sort of illiberality is that which, with broad unblushing effrontery, imputes

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to the worst motives those very principles which the revilers, before their new illumination, themselves professed and propagated. It is amusing to observe the bustle of alarm which Mr. W. Smith's remarks on the Renegades of the present free and happy era have excited among them. They are all bristling like wasps (keen for revenge), and smarting and agonising at every pore! The *Courier* has put forth a defence of this worst and basest sort of illiberality; which is, we are told, only the natural result of an honest conversion, looking back with abhorrence on former mischievous delusions; and any fair allowance for similar errors, supposing them to be errors, in others, any feeling of candour or charity or compassion or respect, is compared with equal elegance and justice, to the sympathy which a reformed rake might be required to feel for the dicers and harlot-mongers with whom he once consorted. Admirable reasoner! So, Sir, the debauchee, who games and haunts the brothel, (if we may borrow the *Courier's* delicate flowers of style) really imagines that he is promoting the cause of human improvement in freedom and knowledge! or he who resists tyranny with Hampden, or who worships the ONE GOD AND FATHER with the Christian philosopher Locke, is conscious of being one of the vilest of reprobates! Either, Sir, the man who writes thus, must confess that he himself never had any principles whatever, and, sensible of his own former bad motives, imputes them to all who now think as he once professed to think, or he must own himself a base and shameless libeller of honest men. Whoever this Defender of Mr. Southey may be, he is evidently sore on the subject, from an alarmed fellow-feeling and a wounded vanity. *Proximus ardet Ucalegon*. This hack writer of the *Courier* has a spell upon him, which denies him the happy power of invisibility. From the forced and quaint images, the vile puns, the uncouth and floundering attempts at humour, the bloatedness of the eloquence, and the slang of the blackguardisms, we cannot be mistaken in the writer of this effusion of disinterested generosity. This sympathy is natural. The author of the *Conciones ad Populum*, and the author of *The Wat Tyler*, are sworn brothers in the same cause of righteous apostacy. They both, with meanness and insolence, revile men of the soundest patriotic views, the clearest intentions, and the most enlightened constitutional knowledge; they both raise the old and execrable cry of 'Church and King;' they both echo the phrases of 'the swinish multitude' and 'the enemies of the Church'; they both would tie down the reason and consciences of men with the rusty fetters of the dark ages of superstition; they both set the brand of disaffection on all without the pale of political theology; and both would hunt the Dissenters out of the land, and get a Unitarian in the pillory. Here

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is then a sufficient affinity of sentiment to account for the appearance of Mr. Coleridge in the character of Pythias, without resorting to the motives of real admiration, of private gratitude, or the recollections of long friendship. How far *these* had influence, I may perhaps show.

The memory of great metaphysicians may be treacherous, like that of common men. The author of *The Friend* is troubled at times and seasons with a treacherous memory: but perhaps he may remember a visit to Bristol. He *may* remember (I allude to no confidential whisperings—no unguarded private moments—but to facts of open and ostentatious notoriety): he *may* remember *publicly*, before several strangers, and in the midst of a public library, turning into the most merciless ridicule 'The dear Friend' whom he now calls Southey the philologist—Southey the historian—Southey the poet of the *Thalaba*, the *Madoc*, and the *Roderic*! Mr. Coleridge recited an Ode of his dear Friend, in the hearing of these persons, with a tone and manner of the most contemptuous burlesque, and accused him of having stolen from Wordsworth images which he knew not how to use. Does Mr. Coleridge forget this? Does he remember, that he also took down *THE Joan of Arc*, and recited in the same ridiculous tone (I do not mean his usual tone, but one which he meant should be ridiculous) more than a page of the poem, with the ironical comment—'This, Gentlemen, is poetry!' Does he remember that he then recited, by way of contrast, some forty lines of his own contribution to the same poem, in his *usual* bombastic manner; and that after this disgusting display of egotism and malignity, he observed, 'Poor fellow, he *may* be a Reviewer, but Heaven bless the man if he thinks himself a Poet?'

Mr. W. Smith will perhaps oblige the author of *The Friend*, by returning to him the quotation from Horace, after filling up the blanks:—

' Absentem qui rodit amicum,  
Qui non defendit alio culpente: *solutos*  
*Qui captat risus hominum famamque dicacis,*  
Hic NIGER est: hunc tu, Romane, caveto!'

You will perceive, Sir, that I do not speak of the author of the *Watchman*, or of the *Ode to the departing Year*, or of the *Ode to Sniller*, or of the *Sonnet to Dr. Priestley*, or of the *Religious Musings*: these are only the settings of the gem, not the gem itself: I speak of 'THE MAN.'

VINDEX.

*Bristol, March 20.*

## THE TREATMENT OF STATE PRISONERS

### THE TREATMENT OF STATE PRISONERS

*The Morning Chronicle.*

July 5, 1817.

OUR readers will have seen that Lord Castlereagh disposed of the motion relative to the treatment of poor Evans, with that characteristic coolness, which sits so agreeably upon his Lordship. His arguments and his understanding are constructed upon true mechanical principles, and work, with the least possible expence of thought or feeling, alike conveniently for himself, fatally for others. He meets with no rubs, and leaves no botches in his way, from those weaknesses of the nerves, or cobwebs of the brain, which sometimes interrupt and perplex other people. He makes clear work of whatever he lays his hand upon. He reduced the whole question to an easy alternative—either the House must not inquire into the Petition before them, or they must inquire into every other Petition that might or might not be presented; either they were to inquire into every possible grievance that might or might not exist, or they were to inquire into none that did. Admirable logician! How much are the House obliged to him for abridging their labours, and lightening the weight of their duties, by taking their whole exercise and their whole responsibility upon himself! He first vests in himself and his colleagues the power of arbitrarily imprisoning the subject at will, on the plea that any abuse of this power will be impossible, as it will be instantly open to the cognisance and redress of Parliament, and he then shuts the door in the face of all inquiry, and of all redress of abuses in the exercise of this arbitrary power, on the plea, that as the House cannot possibly inquire into all abuses that may possibly be committed, or pretended, they must inquire into none, even the most idle, vexatious, flagrant, or notorious—that they must resign their functions altogether into the hands of Ministers, declare their ‘occupation gone,’ and, in despair at the multiplying abuses of the illegal and unwarrantable power of imprisonment overpowering their imaginations and senses, under the auspices of the Noble Lord and his system, are to make over to him, in full, the right of committing injustice and redressing it, in all cases whatever, by his own proper authority, which, as it will be impossible to do in all cases, he will of course do *in none*! For, if he was to begin the reform of abuses of his own committing, where could he end? This reasoning, we beg leave to suggest to his Lordship, with all due deference, is flat nonsense. To state that the House of Commons, as called upon to protect the rights and redress the grievances of the subject, are either to perform what is impossible, or to do nothing, to take every imaginary, unknown case of injustice under their care, or

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to turn their backs upon every known and immediate case that is brought before them, is to contradict common sense, common justice, the law of the land, and the usage of Parliament ; but, in doing all this, the Noble Lord was consistent with himself, and true to the cause he has so much at heart. There is nothing so logical as passion, nothing so true as habit. Hence the uniformity of purpose which his Lordship maintains in all his measures, the enviable, instinctive bias with which he seizes upon the wrong side of every argument. In reading his Lordship's speeches, we are not to admire the ingenuity, or even presence of mind, with which he contrives to get rid of the objections of humanity, of justice and reason, so much as the happy constitution of temperament by which the petty distinctions of right and wrong are so frequently lost upon him.

In general it may be said that the love of liberty makes but a faint impression on the mind of a great Statesman : the love of power sinks deeper into it, discolours every object, taints the source of every feeling, and penetrates, moves, and rouses into violent and dangerous action the whole inert mass. The common topics of argument or declamation, the little idle stories and illustrations of flutes, spiders, flies, and robin-red-breasts, never once touch his breast, or divert his attention ; they are *bagatelles*, which with all other things, 'light, transitory, and vain,' fly up and flutter idly in that limbo of vanity, the heads of the Opposition. But to return to Lord Castlereagh. *'If they consented to inquire now, what security was there that some new case would not be brought forward tomorrow, and so on without any limit ?'* The best security would be in not entrusting any persons with the power of arbitrary imprisonment, and illegal punishment. But this is going into the merits and mischiefs of the Habeas Corpus Suspension, which his Lordship deprecates. But if there is to be no inquiry, what security have we, during the continuance of this arbitrary power, against its abuse ? None but the discretion of those who may abuse it. The mildness of Lord Castlereagh, the wisdom of Lord Sidmouth, and the good word of Mr. Hiley Addington, his brother ! with whom 'all is conscience and tender heart' ! These persons have, it seems, acquired an absolute power over us only to prove their good will towards us. We thank them. *'In point of fact, however, there was not one of the grievances mentioned in the Petition, which, upon application to the proper authority'* (are not the House of Commons a proper authority ? What, so hot !) *'had not been relieved.'* In point of fact, this is not true. But at any rate, these grievances which had been relieved, had been first inflicted, designedly or not, by the amiable and infallible trio.

Again, would these grievances, which were so inflicted, have been

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relieved upon application to *the proper authority*, had there been no final appeal in reserve to *an improper authority*? Or would this relief be afforded, were the House of Commons, as a standing order of Ministers, to be deterred from inquiring into any case that may happen, or from receiving any Petition that may be presented, under the severe penalty of being forced by Lord Castlereagh's severe logic to follow up this dangerous and improper precedent by endless, frivolous inquiries and concessions? '*He readily admitted that the treatment and condition of prisoners, were always matters of serious importance*' (how kind, how considerate on the part of his Lordship, who is so jealous of this privilege of humanity that he is willing to keep the exercise of it entirely in his own hands!) '*but he did not think they ought to occupy the exclusive attention of Parliament,*' (No, he thinks they ought not to occupy it at all, for if it does, it must, he says, occupy their whole time and attention) '*especially as the practice of bringing them forward there had lately become so systematic.*' We should make just the contrary inference from this last circumstance; for we are pretty sure that this practice of bringing such cases forward, would hardly have become systematic but from the frequency of their occurrence, and from the systematic neglect of redress in *the proper quarters*. We think Parliament are bound in decency not to relax from the system of watching the abuse of arbitrary power, not exercised by law, but by the discretion of an individual, which they have entrusted to Ministers. '*They would have nothing to do but to hold Committees, to hear cases on one side and the other, and in which, after all, they would find only the most contradictory statements.*'

His Lordship, we believe, does not much like to have 'the healthful hue of resolution sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.' But we can recommend him a remedy for this perplexity, difficulty, and contradiction. He has only to appoint his own Committee, make out his own case, get those immaculate and patriotic persons, Castles and Oliver, to give strong evidence on one side of the case, and then the evidence will come out as clear as day and all of one colour, as it did out of the Green Bag. Farther, if his Lordship would extend his favourite system of *espionage* to state-prisons, and indeed to all prisons throughout the country, and set his old friends at work to watch the abuses of power, and the ill-treatment of their victims by the gaolers (we do not mean, of course, that his Lordship's philanthropic assistants should urge the gaolers to treat them worse than they were disposed, so to make out a more heinous case against arbitrary power, and in favour of abused humanity), we say, if his Lordship would give such a direction to the zeal and ability of the subjects of his political patronage and moral panegyrics, it would do more than any other thing to relieve



## THE PRESS—COLERIDGE, SOUTHEY,

those worthy persons from the odium which attaches to their characters, and to himself for his connection with them.

## THE PRESS—COLERIDGE, SOUTHEY, WORDS- WORTH, AND BENTHAM

*The Yellow Dwarf.*

January 3, 1818.

A DEBATE has been lately going on, in the French House of Commons, respecting the Liberty of the Press. M. Jollivet said, 'the Liberty of the Press is less necessary in a Representative Government than in any other.' 'The press' he added, 'is represented as the only instrument by which truth can be made known; but the passions of men are too impetuous, to permit the Press that liberty which some demand. *The real national representation is in the King*;<sup>1</sup>—the legitimate inheritance of his Crown, from whence all powers and honours are derived, fixes there, with the destinies of the people. This is the primitive representation, from which all others emanate. There is the sacred depot of sovereignty. The powers established by the Charter are only the means of that sovereignty, for the dispensation of order and justice. We must then leave out of the question this pretended influence of the Liberty of the Press upon our representative Government, in favour of the branch called the Democratic. We must reject principles which can never return in France. By this course we may perhaps lose some commentaries upon the rights of man, but all classes of society will find their repose in it.'

So says M. Jollivet; and so sings a modern bard:—

'*Kiuprili*.—Had'st thou believ'd thine own tale, had'st thou fancied  
Thyself the rightful successor of Andreas,  
Would'st thou have pilfer'd from our school-boys' themes  
These shallow sophisms of a popular choice?  
What people? How convened? or, if convened,  
Must not the magic power that charms together  
Millions of men in council, needs have power  
To win or wield them? Better, O far better  
Shout forth thy titles to yon circling mountains  
And with a thousand-fold reverberation  
Make the rocks flatter thee, and the volleying air,  
Unbribed, shout back to thee, King Emerick!  
By wholesome laws t'imbank the sov'reign power,  
To deepen by restraint, and by prevention  
Of lawless will t'amass and guide the flood,

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<sup>1</sup> In this sort of representative Government the utility of the Press seems by no means superseded.

## WORDSWORTH, AND BENTHAM

In its majestic channel, is man's task  
And the true patriot's glory! *In all else*  
*Men safer trust to Heaven, than to themselves*  
When least themselves in the mad whirl of crowds  
Where folly is contagious, and too oft  
Even wise men leave their better sense at home  
To chide and wonder at them when return'd.'

*Coleridge's Zapolya.*

Whether M. Jollivet, the French speaker, was one of the Orators of the Human Race in the time of Robespierre, we do not know; but this we know, that Mr. Coleridge was at that time delivering *Conciones ad populum* in a tone of mob-sycophancy, the height and heat of which could, it seems, only be qualified by the doctrines of Divine Right and Passive Obedience. The above exquisite morceau of political logic, and dramatic recantation of the author's popular harangues, was intended for representation at Drury-Lane Theatre, and was one of the passages pointed out, if we are to believe Mr. Coleridge, as a reason for the rejection of this spurious offspring of his loyal Muse.

Mr. Southey has not yet given us a poetical version of the true *Jus Divinum*. We should like to know what he says to this speech of M. Jollivet—Content or Not Content—and whether this was the result he anticipated when he so sweetly and loudly, about three years ago, invited France 'restored and shaking off her chain' to join in his (Mr. Southey's) triumphal song,—

*'Glory to God on high, Deliverance to Mankind.'*

Can that laurel wreath which adorns his brows (if it still adorns them) any longer hide or prevent those blushes, deep and lasting, which should suffuse his once well-meaning face for having been the shameful dupe of a cozenage so shameful?

As to Mr. Wordsworth, another of these heroic deliverers, he is 'a full solemn man,' and you cannot get much out of him. But we should like to hear his opinion—Aye or No—of M. Jollivet's allied notions of liberty and the rights of man. Is this sort of legitimate clapping down under the hatches the deliverance for which he mouthed out deep-toned Odes and Sonnets? Is this repose, the repose of lasting slavery and avowed, bare-faced annihilation of the rights of human nature, the consummation devoutly to be wished, which kindled in him so much disinterested zeal against all his old friends and feelings? If he were to say so, the very echoes of his favourite mountains, 'with thousand-fold reverberation,' would contradict him. But he says nothing. He is profoundly silent. He will not answer Mum to our Budget. From the eleva-

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tion of his former well-timed enthusiasm against tyrants and conquerors, he slid into a place: and he will never rise out of it by any ill-timed intemperance. *Snug's the word.* St. Peter is well at Rome; and Mr. Wordsworth is attached to the Excise. What is it to him, seated on Rydal Mount, what M. Jollivet, a prating Frenchman, says to that poor creature, Louis XVIII? It is enough for Mr. Wordsworth that he signs his stamped receipts and distributes them:—he is not bound, *by his office*, to subscribe to M. Jollivet's doctrines, or to circulate them in this country. He is a custom-house officer, and no longer a citizen of the world. He keeps himself quiet, like the philosopher of old, lest the higher powers should hear him. If he were to mutter a syllable against any one act of legitimate despotism, he knows (in his sleeve) that not all his odes on Hoffer and Schill, and the Cortes, or even to the King, would save him one hour. He is wise. After having endorsed the accommodation bills of the Allied Sovereigns on liberty and independence, with a pen which ought to have been sacred to humanity, he now leaves it to the people of France, Spain, Italy, to us, to the world, to take up these dishonoured forgeries, and will not utter a word of resentment or indignation, or contempt, against those who have made him a poor accomplice in a fraud upon mankind!

This sort of shuffling on the side of principle, and tenaciousness on the side of power, seems to be the peculiar privilege of the race of modern poets. The philosophers, if not much wiser, appear to be honester. Some of these had been taken in, but they want to be let out. They declare off in time to save at least their own characters, and will not sign and seal 'a dateless bargain to all-engrossing despotism,' when she unfolds the long dark scroll of her rotten parchment bonds to them, and they see it 'stretching out even to the crack of doom.' They had got into a bad house, it is true, thinking, though the owners were the same, they had changed their calling, in company with an old bawd masked, who pretended to have just escaped being robbed and ravished, if not murdered. They were proud of such an opportunity of shewing their gallantry. But as soon as the old lady pulled off her mask of Legitimacy, and shewed herself 'the same, that is, that was, and is to be,' our philosophers went to the window, threw up the sash, and alarmed the neighbourhood; while the poets, either charmed, with the paint and patches of the hag, or with her gold and trinkets, put a grave face upon the matter, make it a point of conscience, a match for life—for better or worse, stick to their filthy bargain, go to bed, and by lying quiet and keeping close, would fain persuade the people out of doors that all is well, while they are fumbling at the regeneration of

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mankind out of an old rotten carcase, and threatening us, as the legitimate consequence of their impotent and obscene attempts, with the spawn of Bible and Missionary Societies, Schools for All, and a little aiery of children, with a whole brood of hornbooks and catechisms,—a superfetation more preposterous than that of Mrs. Tofts, the rabbit-breeding lady in Hogarth.—Mr. Bentham was one of the philosophers who were so taken in by the projects of the Holy Alliance, but who did not chuse to continue so with his eyes open. He had lent an ear to the promises of kings. He thought tyrants had taken a sudden fancy to the abstract principles of sound legislation. With a little exuberance of philosophical vanity, and a little want of philosophical penetration, he thought he could ‘charm these deaf adders wisely.’ He thought absolute sovereigns, having suffered persecution, had learnt mercy: that they were convinced, by their own experience, of the value of justice, truth, and liberty. He did not suspect their appeal to humanity was the cry of the crocodile to allure and destroy: he, like many more, thought their tears were ‘drops which sacred pity had engendered.’ Not so. He soon found his mistake; and no sooner found, than he hastes to amend it. He does not try (half fool, half knave) to hush up the affair, to screen their villainy, or salve his own idle vanity. Out the whole story comes, in a book which he has just published,<sup>1</sup> containing an account of the papers, and correspondence which passed between himself and the Emperor Alexander. Mr. Bentham sent the autocrat a plan of legislation, and the sovereign sent him a snuff-box in return. The Emperor however took no other notice of the plan, and the legislator returned the snuff-box. This was as it should be. It is of course the favourite object of Alexander to be lord over millions of slaves: it must be Mr. Bentham’s greatest ambition to be a wise and honest man. He had committed his character for wisdom sufficiently in supposing that the lord of millions of slaves would, in the pure coxcombr of his heart, and in the giddy round of gold snuff-boxes, and in his delight in the infinite multiplication of his own pictures set in brilliants, set millions of slaves free! The Emperor would as soon let Mr. Bentham cuckold him as resign his people to the Platonic embraces of Mr. Bentham’s legislative genius. But having gone thus far on a wrong calculation of the characters of rulers, Mr. Bentham was too honest a man to try to repeat the imposition upon others of which he had been made the momentary dupe himself. He was not ambitious any longer to remain that tool

‘Which knaves do work with, called a fool.’

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<sup>1</sup> Papers on Codification. What an odd title. Mr. Bentham writes a style of his own, and in his titlepages he puts his best foot foremost.

## MR. COLERIDGE'S LECTURES

He would not be made a mild decoy of humanity, and go a dottrel-catching with the Emperor Alexander in Finland, in Poland, or in South America. He would not be made an amiable stalking-horse of liberty and equality for royal sportsmen to catch their silly prey, the human race, and then to be turned loose, stripped of his netting and his ribbons, to graze where he could. He had a spirit above it. He could not brook this league with detected hypocrisy and bare-faced power. He had not the stomach to swallow a lie for truth. He could not bring himself to say, or by any tampering with his own mind to believe that a thing *was* what he knew *it was not*. He was by habit a logician—by nature, a plain, literal man. ‘The Gods had not made him poetical.’ That is, Mr. Bentham had not, like Messrs. Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey, been playing at fast and loose with fiction, till he could like them believe whatever he pleased of matter of fact, and stand to it stoutly too with ‘a mingled air of cunning and of impudence,’—to the equal satisfaction of his understanding and his conscience!

## MR. COLERIDGE'S LECTURES

*The Yellow Dwarf.*

February 14, 1818.

‘ON Friday evening Mr. Coleridge gave his first Lecture on Shakspeare to a numerous and genteel audience. He stated the permanent objects Shakspeare had in view in drawing his characters, and how obviously he disregarded those that were of a transitory nature. The character of *Caliban*, as an original and caricature of Jacobinism, so fully illustrated at Paris during the French Revolution, he described in a vigorous and lively manner, exciting repeated bursts of applause. He commenced an inquiry into the order of succession in which Shakspeare wrote his plays, and decided that *Love's Labour Lost* must have been the first, as there are so many allusions in it such as a youth would make, few or none resulting from an experience of the world. That play and *The Tempest* were the chief objects of his discourse, into which, however, he introduced a great variety of new and striking remarks, not confined to any particular play. As for instance, he said, wherever Shakspeare had drawn a character addicted to sneering, and contempt for the merits of others, that character was sure to be a villain. Vanity, envy, and malice, were its certain accompaniments: too prudent to praise itself, it fed its concentrated egotism by sarcasm and lowering others. This is but a poor description of the very glowing language, ample detail, and profound thought, Mr. Coleridge displayed on this topic, which produced a thunder of applause.’—*Courier*, Feb. 9.

Mr. Coleridge, in his prospectus, modestly observed, that the attending his course of Lectures on Poetry, and ‘those fair parts that there adjacent lie,’ would enable any grown gentleman to talk on all subjects of polite conversation, except religion and politics. By the above extract, and from what we have heard, it should appear that Mr. Coleridge has gone beyond his engagement, and

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given his grown gentleman a slice of religion and politics in the same dish with his account of the Dark Ages. Not like a lady who puts her mind into the postscript, Mr. C. does that first which he promised last. Whatever may be the case with his metaphysical hypercriticisms, his religious and political opinions seem pretty transparent. As he has sent a passage against Jacobinism to his friend Mr. Stuart, of the *Courier*, we wonder that he could not (as he still retains all his old sentiments, with only the advantage of new light added to them) have vamped up a sly passage from his *Conciones ad Populum*, in favour of the so-called Jacobin principles he formerly professed, to have sent it to us. We should gladly do all in our power to assist Mr. Coleridge in publishing a harmony of his opinions, which are, we suspect, too liberal and multifarious to be comprised, in all their speculative and practical bearings, in a shabby Evening Paper. As to this argument about Caliban, we suspect it must have been sadly curtailed and *scissarsed* by Mr. Stuart, in order to fit his cloth to his coat, and to bring Mr. Coleridge's 'unhouselled free conditions into the circumscription and confine' of the Editor's party politics. Caliban is so far from being a prototype of modern Jacobinism, that he is strictly the legitimate sovereign of the isle, and Prospero and the rest are usurpers, who have ousted him from his hereditary jurisdiction by superiority of talent and knowledge. 'This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother;' and he complains bitterly of the artifices used by his new friends to cajole him out of it. He is the Louis xviii. of the enchanted island in *The Tempest*: and Dr. Stoddart would be able to prove by the civil law, that he had the same right to keep possession of it, 'independently of his conduct or merits, as Mr. Coke has to his estate at Holkham.' Even his affront to the daughter of that upstart philosopher Prospero, could not be brought to bar his succession to the natural sovereignty of his dominions. His boast that 'he had peopled else this isle with Calibans,' is very proper and dignified in such a person; for it is evident that the right line would be supplanted in failure of his issue; and that the superior beauty and accomplishments of Ferdinand and Miranda could no more be opposed to the legitimate claims of this deformed and loathsome monster, than the beauty and intellect of the Bonaparte family can be opposed to the bloated and ricketty minds and bodies of the Bourbons, cast, as they are, in the true *Jus Divinum* mould! This is gross. Why does Mr. Coleridge provoke us to write as great nonsense as he talks? Why also does he not tell, in his general 'lunes and abstractions,' what to think of Prospero's brother, the Duke, who usurped his crown, and drove him into banishment; or of those finished Court-practitioners, Sebastian

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and Antonio, who wanted to murder the sleeping King ? Were they Jacobins like Caliban, or legitimate personages, like Mr. Coleridge ? Did they belong to the new school or the old ? That is the question ; but it is a question which our lay-preacher will take care not to answer. Shakespear, says Mr. Coleridge, always spoke of mobs with contempt, but with kindness. Mr. Coleridge does better : he speaks of mobs with contempt, and of Courts with kindness. Again, says this critical discoverer of a meaning in a millstone, Caliban had that envy of superior genius and virtue, which was a mark of the true Jacobins in the time of the French Revolution. We are sorry to hear, that on one occasion Mr. C. was interrupted in a tirade upon this favourite topic, on which he was led out of pure generosity, to enlighten the grown gentlemen who came to hear him, by a person calling out in good broad Scotch, ' But you once praised that Revolution, Mr. Coleridge ! ' The worst is, that Mr. Coleridge praised that Revolution when it was triumphant, going on ' conquering and to conquer,' as it was thought ; and now that it is fallen, this man of mighty mind,—of gigantic genius, and superiority to interested motives and mob-sycophancy, insults over it,—tramples on the carcase,—kicks it with his asinine hoofs,—and brays a long, loud, dreary, doleful bravura over it. Of what the Jacobins were in the year 1793, this person has a right to speak, both from experience and observation. The worst he can say of them is, that he was once one of the set. He says that Jacobins are envious people,—and that envious people, not being able to praise themselves openly, take an indirect method of doing this, by depreciating and secretly slandering others. Was it upon this principle that the reformed Jacobin, Mr. Coleridge (what is bred in the bone will never come out of the flesh) took such pains, two years ago, to praise himself by depreciating and canting profound German mysticism against Mr. Maturin's successful tragedy of *Bertram*, which he proved, being himself in the secret, to be ultra-Jacobinism, and quite different in its philosophical and poetical tendency from his own sweet injured *Zapolya*,—the harbinger of Legitimacy and the Bourbons, which was offered to Mr. Whitbread for his acceptance, as a piece of ultra-Royalism, and accordingly rejected by that friend of constitutional government and the people ; but which any one may see represented to the life at the Royal Circus, accompanied with music, and compressed into three acts, to make it ' tedious and brief.' Or was it from the remains of the Jacobin leaven in our philosophical poet, that in a public library at Bristol he endeavoured to advance his own reputation on the ruins of that of a friend, by that lofty panegyric which he pronounced on our laurel-honouring laureat :—' The man

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may indeed be a reviewer, but God help him if he fancies himself a poet?' And is this the man to talk about the envy of the people towards hereditary virtue and wisdom as the cause and root of Jacobinism? This—

'Fie, Sir! O fie! 'tis fulsome,  
Sir, there 's a soil for that rank weed flattery  
To trail its poisonous and obscene clusters :  
A poet's soul should bear a richer fruitage—  
The aconite grew not in Eden. Thou,  
That thou, with lips tipt with the fire of Heaven,  
'Th' excursive eye, that in its earth-wide range  
Drinks in the grandeur and the loveliness,  
That breathes along this high-wrought world of man,  
That hast within thee apprehensions strong  
Of all that 's pure, and passionless, and heavenly—  
That thou, a vapid and mawkish parasite,  
Should'st pipe to that witch Fortune's favourites !  
'Tis coarse—'tis sickly—'tis as though the eagle  
Should spread his sail-broad wings to flap a dunghill ;  
As though a pale and withering pestilence  
Should ride the golden chariot of the sun ;  
As one should use the language of the Gods  
To chatter loose and ribald brothelry.'—FAZIO.

It is well for the author of this tragedy that it has been praised in the *Quarterly Review*,—or we should not wonder to see Mr. Coleridge, as well from these lines as from its being acted with universal applause at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, set about proving it to be a very ultra-Jacobinical performance.—But 'to leave this keen encounter of the wits, and fall to something of a slower method.' The reason—(for Mr. Coleridge knows, that if we have not 'reason as plenty as blackberries,' yet what we have, we are ready 'to give to any man without compulsion')—the reason why Mr. Coleridge is not what he might be, is, that he would be thought what he is not. His motto is, to be nothing or everything. His levity or his vanity is not satisfied with being admired for what he is, but for all that he is capable of becoming, wise or foolish, knave or not. He is not contented to be 'the inconstant moon,' unless he can be the halo round it. He would glitter in the sunshine of public favour, and yet he would cast no shadow. Please all and please none is his rule, he has succeeded. He thinks it a great disparagement of his parts, a proof of a narrow and contracted mind, to be thought to hold only the sentiments which he professes. His capacious mind has room for all opinions, both those which he believes and those which he does not. He thinks he shews the greatest magnanimity when he shews the greatest contempt for his own principles, past,



## THE EDITOR OF THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

present, and to come. He would be esteemed greatly superior, not only to the rest of the world, but to himself. Would any one catch him in the trammels of a sect? Would any one make him swear to the dogmas of a party? Would any one suppose that he has any prejudices in favour of his own notions? That he is blindly wedded to one single view of a subject, as a man is wedded to one wife? He is shocked at any such imputation of intellectual uxoriousness. Would the Presbyterians try to hook him in?—he knows better than Socinus or old John Knox. Would the Established Church receive him at her wide portals?—he carries too great a weight of the Fathers and school divinity at his back. Would the Whigs patronise him?—he is too straitened in antiquated notions and traditional prejudices. Would the Tories take him in?—he is too liberal, enlightened, and transcendental for them. Would principle bind him?—he shuffles out of it, as a clog upon his freedom of thought, ‘his large discourse of reason, looking before and after.’ Would interest lay dirty hands upon him?—he jockies her too by some fetch or conundrum, borrowed from the great clerks of the so-called Dark Ages. You can no more know where to have him than an otter. You might as well hedge the cuckoo. You see him now squat like a toad at the ear of the *Courier*; and oh! that we could rouse him up once more into an archangel’s shape. But what is it to him what so poor a thing as he himself is, who is sublimely indifferent to all other things, and who may be looked upon as a terrible petrification of religion, genius, and the love of liberty. Yet it is too much to think that he who began his career with two Sonnets to Lord Stanhope and Mary Wolstonecraft, in the *Morning Chronicle*, should end with slimy, drivelling abuse of Jacobinism and the French Revolution, in the *Courier*;—that, like some devoted frantic, he should seek the praise of martyrdom by mangling his own soul with a prostituted, unpaid-for pen, and let out his last breath as a pander to that which would be a falsehood, but that it means nothing.

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*The Examiner.*

June 14, 1818.

THIS little person is a considerable cat’s-paw; and so far worthy of some slight notice. He is the *Government Critic*, a character nicely differing from that of a government spy—the invisible link, that connects literature with the police. It is his business to keep a strict eye over all writers who differ in opinion with His Majesty’s Ministers,

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and to measure their talents and attainments by the standard of their servility and meanness. For this office he is well qualified.—The Editor of the *Quarterly Review* is also Paymaster of the Band of Gentleman-Pensioners; and whenever an author comes before him in the one capacity, with whom he is not acquainted in the other, he knows how to deal with him. He has his cue beforehand. The distinction between truth and falsehood is lost upon him; he knows only the distinction between Whig and Tory. The same set of thread-bare common-places, the same second-hand assortment of abusive nick-names, are always repeated; and the ready convenient lie comes in aid of the lack of other resources, and passes off, with impunity, in the garb of religion and loyalty. He is under the protection of *the Court*; and his zeal for his King and country gives him a right to say what he pleases of every public writer who does not do all in his power to pamper the one into a tyrant, and to trample the other into a herd of slaves. Without wit or understanding in himself, he derives his weight with the great and powerful from the very circumstance that takes away all real weight from his opinion, *viz.* that it has no one object but to flatter their folly and vices in the grossest manner, by holding up to hatred and contempt whatever opposes in the slightest degree, or in the most flagrant instances of abuse, their pride and passions. Accustomed to the indulgence of his mercenary virulence and party-spite, he seems to have lost all relish as well as capacity for the ordinary exercises of the understanding, and makes up for the obvious want of ability by the bare-faced want of principle. There is something in the nature of the man that suits with his office. He is in no danger of exciting the jealousy of his patrons by a splendid display of extraordinary talents, while his sordid devotion to their will, and to his own interest, at once ensures their gratitude and contempt. Of an humble origin himself, he recommends his performances to persons of fashion by always abusing *low people*, with the smartness of a lady's waiting-woman, and the independent spirit of a travelling tutor. Raised from the lowest rank to his present despicable eminence in the world of letters, he is indignant that any one should attempt to rise into notice, except by the same regular trammels and servile gradations, or go about to separate the stamp of merit from the badge of sycophancy. The silent listener in select circles, and menial tool of noble families, has become the oracle of Church and State. The purveyor to the prejudices of a private patron succeeds, by no other title, to regulate the public taste. Having felt the inconvenience of poverty, this man looks up with low and grovelling admiration to the advantages of wealth and power: having had to contend with the mechanical

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difficulties of ignorance, he sees nothing in learning but its mechanical uses. A self-taught man naturally becomes a pedant, and mistakes the means of knowledge for the end, unless he is a man of genius; and Mr. Gifford is not a man of genius. From having known nothing originally, he thinks it a great matter to know anything now, no matter what or how small it is—nay, the smaller and more insignificant it is, the more curious he thinks it, as it is farther removed from common sense and human nature. The collating of points and commas is the highest game his literary ambition can reach to, and the squabbles of editors are to him infinitely more important than the meaning of an author. He thinks more of the letter than the spirit of a passage; and in his eagerness to show his minute superiority over others, misses both. There cannot be a greater nuisance than a dull, envious, low-bred man, who is placed in the situation of the Editor of the *Quarterly Review*. Conscious that his reputation stands on very slender and narrow foundations, he is naturally jealous of the pretensions of others. He insults over unsuccessful authors; he hates successful ones. He is angry at the faults of a work, more angry at its excellences. If an opinion is old, he treats it with supercilious indifference; if it is new, it provokes his rage. Having but a limited range of understanding, every thing beyond that range appears to him a paradox and an absurdity: and he resents every suggestion of the kind as an imposition on the public, and an insult on his own sagacity. He cavils at what he does not comprehend, and misrepresents what he knows to be true. Bound to go through the periodical task of abusing all those who are not, like himself, the abject tools of power, his irritation increases with the number of obstacles he meets with, and the number of sacrifices he is obliged to make of common sense and veracity to his interest and self-conceit. Every instance of prevarication he wilfully commits makes him more in love with hypocrisy, and every indulgence of his hired malignity makes him more disposed to repeat the insult and the injury. His understanding becomes more and more distorted, and his feelings more and more callous. Grown old in the service of corruption, he drivels on to the last with prostituted impotence, and shameless effrontery; salves a meagre reputation for wit, by venting the dribbles of his spleen and impertinence on others; answers their arguments by confuting himself; mistakes habitual obtuseness of intellect for a particular acuteness, not to be imposed upon by shallow pretensions; unprincipled rancour for zealous loyalty; and the irritable, discontented, vindictive and peevish effusions of bodily pain and mental infirmity, for proofs of refinement of taste and strength of understanding.

## THE WESTMORELAND ELECTION

### MR. WORDSWORTH AND THE WESTMORELAND ELECTION

*The Examiner.*

July 5, 1818.

IN this contest between sycophancy and independence, a number of election squibs are of course put forth by both parties. A certain Poet is said to have taken part in the literary drudgery of the *patronage* side of the question, and in the division of labour, with a view to that of the spoil, to have taken upon him to find out and expose the bad grammar of his rustic and less classical opponents. By the bye, Mr. Wordsworth (to drop the *incognito*) at one time considered the rustic and the classical in language as the same thing, and preferred the uninformed idioms of his native county to the poetical diction of Pope's Homer. His antagonists retorted on our lyrical hypercritic, that what they wanted was not grammatical niceties, but the diminution of taxes, which they did not think a dependent on a lordly boroughmonger would labour hard to promote. This was the common sense of the question, at which no doubt the poetical distributor of stamps would sneer in his sardonic way. But they might have answered him in his own way, and not left him one gibe 'to mock his own grinning.' In Mr. W.'s Letter to Mr. Gray, of Edinburgh (the dullest and most contemptible prose-composition in the language), is the following passage:—

'*Whom* did the poet intend *should be* thought of as occupying that grave over which, after modestly setting forth the moral discernment and warm affections of its "poor inhabitant," it is supposed to be inscribed that

Thoughtless follies laid him low, -  
And stained his name?

*Who* but himself—himself anticipating the too probable termination of his own course?—P. 27.

Who but Mr. Wordsworth, a person triumphing over the slips of the pen in an electioneering placard, would have put to the press such a sentence as this? We leave it to his friend Mr. Coleridge to extricate him from this grammatical scrape, unless Mr. Coleridge, since the publication of the first number of the *Encyclopedia Metropolitana*, has conceived as unconquerable an aversion to his favourite study of grammar as he has (from a similar failure) to the principles of jacobinism. Or if Mr. C. should decline to interfere, perhaps Dr. Stoddart (who corrects the press for Mr. Coleridge, making double nonsense of what he writes) may undertake the same friendly office for Mr. Wordsworth, and translate the above passage into legitimate English. Since the stoppage of his Correspondence with the Duke

## ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

of Levis, this professional gentleman has a great deal of disposable controversial and 'excellent senseless' matter lying on his hands.

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*The Examiner.*

June 4, 1820.

*The Courier* has the face to hazard the following piece of stuff, in an article on the celebration of the Triumph of Westminster:—

'The flatterers of Kings and Ministers are reproached as sycophants. What are the flatterers of the people? He who tells a Monarch that he is the wisest, bravest, and best of men, is scoffed at for his servility. What then should be his reward who tells shoemakers, tallow-chandlers, and tailors, that they are paragons of wisdom, patriotism, virtue, and knowledge?'

A notable discovery, i' faith! Did anybody tell the Westminster Electors that they were 'paragons?' And can all the supporters of Sir F. Burdett be included in the three classes here so impartially enumerated? And is there no difference between playing the sycophant to a king, who is the bestower of places, pensions, and sinecures, of titles and honours,—and telling a mixed assembly composed of the boasted middle classes of the metropolis of England, that they are the most 'enlightened' and 'patriotic' electors in the kingdom? *The Courier* tells us that the flatterer of Foyalty is scoffed at, and asks what should be the reward of the flatterer of tailors and shoemakers. Does the *Courier* mean to say that any popular orator will seek out occasions to flatter assemblies of tailors and shoemakers for the sake of the temporary clap, and with the certainty of being 'scoffed at' by all the rest of the town, who are not present? Why does the candid journalist think it expedient to insert a grave report of the Westminster dinner? Do his loyal and religious readers scoff or bite their lips at it?—These are puzzling questions for this facetious discoverer of analogies: lest he should not answer, we will in the meantime try to remove the wonder our readers may have felt at the above extract. A common-place blockhead will sometimes make a successful hack-writer, if his self-complacency keeps pace with his stupidity. We have an instance in —. This fellow is a perfect Scrub, and yet would pass for a wag by dint of sheer impertinence. He is sleek and in good case: and is satisfied with that and with his pay, without the applause of the many, which he cannot get. He publishes a quarto volume of criticisms and advertises at the end that if nobody answers, that is, takes any notice of his crudities, he shall consider them as unanswerable. Nobody has read the book, and he has been puffed and blown up with an opinion of himself ever since,

## ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

in the manner we see. 'Oh! for a Muse of *flesh*,' he may exclaim as he sits down to his daily task. His fat keeps him company, and his conceit keeps his folly in countenance. He wheezes out a sentence, and sweats with all the inspiration of official authority. He finds himself dull, and thinks it a good joke: he has nothing to say, and sets to work more busily than ever.

'And scribbles, as he sits, for want of thought.'

He is a sprightly tool, and rolls and wriggles and crawls about in the rank corruptions of the press like a maggot in a rotten cheese. He has the manner of a person waked out of a sound nap by a smart blow across the shoulders, who looks about him, rubs his eyes, and cries, 'Bless me,' with great alacrity. His obtuseness keeps him on the alert. He is in a state of continual liveliness, bustle, and surprise from the shock between his understanding and common sense and honesty. He is all alive, because he did not perceive a thing at first; thinks his not understanding your drift exceedingly droll and laughable; blunders again, and when he discovers his mistake, fancies he has you at an advantage. He cannot make out the construction of a paragraph in 'the leading journal of Europe,' and calls it bad grammar. This he thinks a lucky hit; it produces a smart controversy, and the combatants are well matched:—'weigh them, and a feather will turn the scale of their *avoirdu pois*.' He has no notion of principle, and chuckles over this as a notable discovery. He picks up a lie or a sophism; and repeats it with hireling pertness and gravity, for the benefit of the clergy, gentry, and the respectable part of the community in general, who are readers of the \* \* \* \* \*. In shuffling off an objection he first reduces it to his own standard of no meaning, and then answers it very wisely. His happy incapacity admits just so much of an idea as leaves no thought and no feeling. The sound is absorbed in his 'fair, large ears'; while the sense rolls off from the well-oiled surface of his mind and body. By natural assimilation whatever his pen touches turns to wordy, nauseous impertinence; and to convict him of a breach of probity or make him ashamed of a lie, it would be necessary to endue him with a new faculty, and to let him see that there is anything in the world of the slightest importance that is not a mere bagatelle, but as it furnishes matter for his interest, servility, callous foppery, pertness, and conceit.

## CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS

### CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS<sup>1</sup>

*The Edinburgh Review.*

July 1821.

WE cannot but hail with satisfaction the proofs contained in this Report, of the increasing attention of the Legislature to the amendment of our Penal Laws, and the progress of liberal and enlightened notions on the subject in the great body of the people. We say this, because we are convinced that the general discussion of all subjects of public interest leads ultimately to sound and salutary views of them; and besides, we conceive that the manifestation of a strong disposition to remedy the defects of existing institutions, implies the absence of the only obstacle that can ultimately frustrate its accomplishment. To have the will to benefit or relieve the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, is (in the community at large) to have the power. The power, indeed, is there always; and all that is wanted to give it effect, is the inclination. To have a spirit of inquiry and philanthropy excited, is nearly all that the friend of truth and justice requires; and when we see that spirit excited and in motion, we need not doubt of the results. We are aware that there is a cant of humanity, and a cant of liberality, on this as well as on other subjects; and sorry should we be to learn that this cant was quite exploded; for when there is no longer any cant about a thing, we may be sure the thing itself is pretty well out of fashion; cant, in reality, being nothing but the overacting of pretenders to popular merits. What we have chiefly to guard against, however, on this occasion, is not a spurious zeal, but the callous indifference which discards not only every nice feeling, but every pretension to common humanity; and that bigotted sophistry which takes delight in thwarting every advance in improvement and knowledge.

When, in the year 1775, some friends of humanity in the city of London (merchants and others), began to look into the iniquities of the Slave-trade, and the master of a Guinea trader was indicted for throwing 140 negroes overboard in a time of sickness, literally to prevent their being charged to account, the Solicitor-General of that day took high ground on the occasion, and said, 'he was not to be put down by a false cry of pretended humanity, which had been raised to the prejudice of his client; that the slaves who had been thrown overboard were, in the eye of the law, to all intents and purposes, the property of the owners of the ship, and to be considered like any other part of the cargo; and that he must beg leave to protest against any plausible or highly-coloured descriptions of the odium of the case, as irrelevant to the question, and an insidious appeal from law and reason

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Select Committee on Criminal Laws: Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, July 19th, 1819.

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(which ought to guide the decision of the Court), to the passions and feelings of the multitude.' Now, it would not do at all to take up this tone at present ; because, on that question at least, the cant of humanity has in the end triumphed over the loathsome jargon opposed to it. But we may observe the same engines set at work, the same resources of angry invective, or hard-hearted irony employed against every attempt to remove every unabated nuisance. The involuntary burst of indignation which is excited by its first exposure to public notice, is set down as popular clamour ; and the expression of pity or disgust at those objects which unavoidably provoke them, is construed into ' the language of rhetoric rather than of logic ; ' as if, in matters so perfectly indifferent as right and wrong, the natural feelings and sentiments of the human heart were an informality and impertinence ! There is no escaping from this battery, but by taking shelter (which is indeed the object aimed at) in the systematic avowal of every species of moral scepticism and political profligacy. The first and most obvious movement of power and prejudice, when it is likely to be driven out of any of its strongholds, is to raise a violent outcry against all innovation, as opening a door to unbounded licentiousness, confusion and disorder, which is ' to burst upon us like a Levanter,' and involve every thing sacred or valuable in social institutions in a common ruin. When alarm will no longer avail, artifice is resorted to : they descend from nicknames and hyperboles to special pleading and chicanery ; and the next step in the progress is to profess, not to resist the wishes of the public, but to calm and moderate its eagerness—not to exclude innovation altogether, but to let it in with caution, and by degrees,—to examine, to sift objections, and sit as umpires between the possible and the desirable, between theory and practice ; and, under the cover of this profession, to *stultify* the whole proceeding piecemeal, to embarrass, to evade, to demur, to raise difficulties, to ' give forked counsel,' to palliate the worst things, to throw cold water on the most encouraging prospects ; in short, ' though improvement be improvement, yet to throw such changes of vexation on it, as it may lose some colour ; ' and if any thing in the shape of reform *must* come, to let it come as late, and do as little good as possible. Thus it has been proposed, as the result of a grave deliberation on the projected revision of our Criminal Laws, and as one of the lofty speculations of a great master-mind (now no more), not to make any alteration in the laws themselves (with the exception of one or two, too ridiculous and harmless to admit a question), but to alter the arrangement, or to throw them altogether, just as they now stand, into one act, with a new title, and perhaps an index ! This, it is thought, might answer to all the conditions of the *minimum* of a reluctant reform, and the *maximum* of a wise legislation !



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It looks well, however, for the cause of humanity, when any thing short of the last outrage and abuse is heaped on its advocates, and its very name. We are not disappointed to learn, that the only pre-meditated attempt to slur the evidence, or to cast a doubt on the fairness of the proceedings in the Committee, has been sanctioned in a quarter, from which it comes with the least prejudicial effect, and with the best grace in the world !

Before we proceed, we shall be allowed to indulge in one or two general observations, as not unimportant in their bearing on the present subject. The first will relate to the spirit in which (as it appears to us) legislative inquiries should be conducted, either by those who have to suggest, or whose business it is to carry them into effect ;—the second, to the progress which has been of late years made in such inquiries, by those who have more particularly made them the objects of their study.

To begin with the first. In the Memoirs of Granville Sharp, lately published, there is an anecdote recorded of the young Prince Naimbanna, well worthy the attention of all unfledged sophists, and embryo politicians.

‘ The name of a person having been mentioned in his presence, who was understood by him to have publicly asserted something very degrading to the general character of Africans, he broke out into violent and vindictive language. He was immediately reminded of the Christian duty of forgiving his enemies ; upon which he answered nearly in the following words :—“ If a man should rob me of my money, I can forgive him ; if a man should shoot at me, or try to stab me, I can forgive him ; if a man should sell me and all my family to a slave-ship, so that we should pass all the rest of our days in slavery in the West Indies, I can forgive him ; but ” (added he, rising from his seat with much emotion) “ if a man takes away the character of the people of my country, I never can forgive him.” Being asked, why he would not extend his forgiveness to those who took away the character of the people of his country, he answered—“ If a man should try to kill me, or should sell me and my family for slaves, he would do an injury to as many as he might kill or sell ; but if any one takes away the character of Black people, that man injures Black people all over the world ; and when he has once taken away their character, there is nothing that he may not do to Black people ever after. That man, for instance, will beat Black men, and say, *Oh, it is only a Black man, why should I not beat him ?* That man will make slaves of Black people ; for when he has taken away their character, he will say, *Oh, they are only Black people, why should I not make them slaves ?* That man will take away all the people of Africa if he can catch them ; and if you ask him,

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But why do you take away all these people? he will say, *Oh, they are only Black people—why should I not take them?* That is the reason why I cannot forgive the man who takes away the character of the people of my country," p. 369.—So we conceive, that if we take away the character of the people of this country, or of any large proportion of them, there is no degree of turpitude or injustice that we may not introduce into the measures and treatment which we consider as most fit for them. To legislate wisely, and for the best, it is necessary that we should think as well, and not as ill, as possible, of those for whom we legislate; or otherwise we shall soon reduce them to the level of our own theories. To treat men as brute beasts in our speculations, is to encourage ourselves to treat them as such in our practice; and that is the way to make them what we pretend to believe they are. To take it for granted that any class of the community is utterly depraved and incorrigible, is not the way either to improve our own treatment of them, or to correct their vicious qualities. And when we see the lower classes of the English people uniformly singled out as marks for the malice or servility of a certain description of writers—when we see them studiously separated, like a degraded *caste*, from the rest of the community, with scarcely the attributes and faculties of the species allowed them,—nay, when they are thrust lower in the scale of humanity than the same classes of any other nation in Europe—though it is to these very classes that we owe the valour of our naval and military heroes, the industry of our artisans and labouring mechanics, and all that we have been told, again and again, elevates us above every other nation in Europe—when we see the *redundant population* (as it is fashionably called) selected as the butt for every effusion of paltry spite, and as the last resource of vindictive penal statutes—when we see every existing evil derived from this unfortunate race, and every possible vice ascribed to them—when we are accustomed to hear the poor, the uninformed, the friendless, put, by tacit consent, out of the pale of society—when their faults and wretchedness are exaggerated with eager impatience, and still greater impatience is shown at every expression of a wish to amend them—when they are familiarly spoken of as a sort of vermin only fit to be hunted down, and exterminated at the discretion of their betters:—we know pretty well what to think, both of the disinterestedness of the motives which give currency to this jargon, and of the wisdom of the policy which should either sanction, or suffer itself to be influenced by its suggestions.

Men do not willingly belie their own forebodings of disaster. There is no malice so strong as the antipathy of ill to good, where it has once taken root and disclosed itself: there is no invention so keen or relent-

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less as that which dreads to be defrauded of its promised repast on vice and misery. On his own showing, the state-physician may be asked to resign his charge, when he pronounces the disorder to be incurable ; and to leave the patient to take his chance of a recovery in the hands of those who are more rash, more sanguine, or more skilful. ' Our final hope ' at worst, can be but ' flat despair.'

*Secondly*, it is common, in speaking of the proposed amendments in this department of our laws, to make a pointed distinction between theory and practice. Now, we beg leave to except against this distinction, in the sense at least in which it is insisted on, nine times out of ten, or in questions of any real difficulty. It is usual to contend, that a thing may hold good in theory, though it is wrong in practice, and that the practice of the law may be good, though every theory is against it. Now, it is so far from being true, that there is any such natural opposition between these things, that if a theory does not answer in practice, it is proof positive that the theory is good for nothing ; and no practice can be good that is at variance with sound theory. Theory, indeed, is nothing but assigning the reasons or principles according to which causes and effects are connected together in fact. No theory is good for any thing that is not founded on general observation and experience ; and, where this is the case, it *must* hold good generally as a guide or rule to direct our decisions or expectations, if properly applied. On the other hand, if it is partially collected or erroneously applied, it is either unfounded in itself, or does not really affect the point in hand. A vague theory that does not rest on the efficient and essential principles of things, will indeed necessarily deceive us ; just as that sort of practice, which is confined to a particular case, can never be made an example or authority for any other. Individual practice, however, it should be observed, is more often and more pointedly at variance with itself than with the wildest theory that could be suggested to explain it.

There are people to be sure, who cannot imagine any thing possible or endurable which is not the actual practice of the time and place and society in which they happen to be born ; and who cry out against that as a dangerous and impracticable theory, which is the actual practice, and has been so from time immemorial of some other place, perhaps not twenty miles distant ; the inhabitants of which are equally convinced of the impossibility or dreadful consequences of every other practice but their own. This, however, is not reason or experience, but the want of it ; sound theory being merely a larger reason, exercised and making its election on a more extended experience or practice, by reducing the clashing instances to some general principles. We every day hear people, for example, in this country, who talk of the

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comparative advantages of a Monarchy or a Republic, and treat the former as a practical reality, and the other as a mere theory or imagination ;—as if a republic was not a thing really existing *in rerum natura*—as if Holland and America and Switzerland, and ancient Greece and Rome, had been chimeras conjured up in the fantastic brain of some Utopia-monger—or as if it were no more possible to live under such a form of government than in fire, or on air or under water—because we live under the British monarchy ! Our gross actual experience is thus set up as the limit of possibility ; and what we approve without knowing the reason, is that which can alone approve itself to the reason of things,—our ignorance and interest being made the standards of truth, of right and wrong ; and this we call keeping up the just distinction between theory and practice !

Now, it is exactly in this spirit that we hear people talking of the abolition of Capital Punishment for the most trifling offences, as *a theory* just dropped from the clouds, as a dream of some whimsical and inexperienced enthusiast, who does not know what is going on in the world, or see by what intricate machinery the stealing in a shop to the value of five shillings, or in a dwelling-house or on a navigable river to the amount of forty shillings, if not punished with death, would lead to the destruction of all law and of all property—for no other reason than that this is the only country upon earth where these offences are ordered to be so punished ; and not considering that there are other countries where capital punishment is abolished altogether, which yet hold up their heads and give signs of life ; and that, in this very country, the only refuge of security and property, the law which enacts the punishment of such offences, is itself no better than a theory, a mere dead letter. Or, if driven from this ground, they then insist that it is the change from the practice to the theory that is fraught with such tremendous consequences, and should be made with such caution, or not at all ; though the abolition, or total alteration of the whole code of penal law in Tuscany, in Austria, and in Russia, was effected by one or two positive edicts, in our own times, as silently and peacefully as ‘ morning brought by night.’ Yet, these are the people who look very wise when the word *theory* is mentioned, and give themselves out for the only solid matter-of-fact reasoners.

The truth indeed is, that pretended practical reasoners are the worst and most mischievous of all others. They ‘ prefer custom ’ (or what they have been taught to consider as such) ‘ before all excellence,’ and are uniformly adverse to every scheme that is suggested for the improvement of social institutions. We see the same names (some of them great and grave ones too) opposed successively to the Abolition of the Slave-Trade, to the concession of the Catholic Claims, and to the

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Amelioration of the Penal Laws,—on the same stale plea of guarding against innovation and theories. The same set of reasoners, however, when they are so minded, can and do admit of innovations of no small magnitude; so that it would not seem to be the danger of innovation which they so much dread, as the plea of Justice or Humanity which they consider as fatal to all sound policy, and to the pervading spirit of existing establishments. Such minds, whenever we find them formally arrayed against any measure of public interest, are a beacon to warn us, not ‘what to follow, but what to shun;’ and their names, thrown into the scale of authority, are as decisive in favour of any suggested improvement, as the more liberal and enlightened names we so confidently expect to see ranged on the antagonist side.

We rejoice, therefore, to find the question of the revision of our penal laws in the train in which it appears to be at present. Both from the Report of the Committee, and the proceedings of the House which have been had thereupon, it seems at last to be the wish of the Legislature to afford every desirable facility to inquiry and improvement on this subject, and to give to our laws, if possible, a milder, more consistent, and effectual form. From the time of Beccaria, men’s minds have been very generally occupied with the arbitrary and unequal apportionment of punishments to offences, and with various projects for introducing a more humane and equitable spirit into the penal code. The feeling and considerate must have been, at all times, shocked with the frequency of dreadful and sanguinary punishments: but, however painful and revolting in themselves, they were thought conducive to the protection of the State, and the ends of public justice. Beccaria was the first writer whose efforts produced a very important change in the public mind in this respect; by demonstrating, that barbarous and sanguinary punishments, for slight and ordinary offences, are not only a great evil in themselves, but that they do no good; that they do not answer the end proposed, but often the contrary; and that the *efficacy* of the law is very frequently in the *inverse* ratio of its *severity*. If increasing the punishment prevented the crime, this, though it might be hard upon the individual, would no doubt be a gain to the public; and the only question would be between our humanity and the expediency of the thing: But, if increasing the punishment beyond a certain point, and, except in certain cases, is not found to prevent, but rather to encourage crimes, then the evil is not only a great and distressing, but a perfectly gratuitous one. The law is barbarous, and impolitic at the same time. This distinction (which Beccaria was the first to promulgate with any considerable effect, or so as to carry the public attention and

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conviction along with him) is a very important one, and the foundation, in a great measure, of all that has been written or done on the subject since : and certainly, all that has been done or observed, in consequence of it, has tended to establish its soundness.

The Report of the Select Committee, and the Minutes of Evidence taken before them, may be considered as little else than a paraphrase and detailed exemplification of the same principle. If, indeed, the efficacy of punishment rose with its severity, and the rash and preposterous suggestions of fear or anger corresponded with the dictates of calm wisdom, the whole art and mystery of criminal jurisprudence would be reduced to a short compass. In that case, it would only be necessary to single out every offence marked down in the catalogue of offences, and to affix the threat of capital punishment, and the most aggravated form of it, to its commission, in order to banish every degree and every instance of crime from the community. If we could purchase entire and instant immunity from crime, merely by hanging up (*pro forma*) tablets thus written in blood, the Dracos would long since have been admitted for the Fathers of their country, and the best benefactors of mankind. Law would be a ceremony of words—a *fiat* of the omnipotence of kings and senates. To prohibit any act, good, bad or indifferent, that might be displeasing to the Legislature, with a certain extreme penalty annexed, would be to make it impossible for that act ever to be committed. But no such miraculous virtue resides in the *dictum* of the laws. Power, therefore, prompted by prudence, has bent to necessity ; and has been compelled, in some degree, to temper justice with mercy. But if the severity and the efficacy of penal enactments do not keep pace together, then it becomes the bounden duty of every one concerned to look at such disproportionate enactments with suspicion and repugnance :—to do away with as much of the severity as is not shown (for it cannot be presumed) to be necessary to prevention, and not to lend a helping hand to the continuance of any law which inflicts a wound on the feelings of humanity, and strikes the sword out of the hands of justice at the same moment.

The true practical question therefore is, What circumstance it is that combines efficacy with severity of punishment ?—and this seems to be, *its being agreeable to the feelings of natural justice, or having the concurrence of the public sentiment in its favour*. All the evidence to which the public has had access on the question, bears out this conclusion. Up to the tone of public feeling against any criminal act, the severity of the punishment may be increased with effect :—beyond that point, it cannot be *forced* with effect ; nor, we might add, with propriety. A conversation which took place in a Debate in the House

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of Lords, between Lord Grenville and Lord Eldon, throws rather a striking light on this part of the subject.

LORD GRENVILLE.—‘According to the view which I take of the case, the only question for the consideration of the House is simply this : Is the crime of stealing privately in a shop to the value of five shillings, an offence to which the punishment of death is fit to be attached? I came to the House this night for the purpose of voting for the present bill, because I think the punishment of death unfit for such an offence. I cannot imagine any man to be so deluded as not to perceive that the question is simply this—“Aye or No, Is the punishment of death a fit punishment to be inflicted for the crime of stealing privately in a shop to the value of five shillings?” This, I contend, is the real question before the House; and every one of your Lordships must make up his mind to the affirmative or negative of the proposition, before he ventures to give his vote upon the present bill. If the argument of the Noble and Learned Lord (the Lord Chancellor) is of any avail, it will warrant the conclusion, that it is only necessary for your Lordships at once, and for every offence, to enact the law of Draco.’

THE LORD CHANCELLOR.—‘I must interrupt the Noble Lord, to assure him, that I never made the assertion, or even insinuated, that the punishment of death is fit for every offence.’

LORD GRENVILLE.—‘I do not impute any such *assertion* to the Noble and Learned Lord. I only maintain, that if the Noble and Learned Lord’s *argument* is of any avail, it necessarily leads to this conclusion. I do not attribute such a principle to the Noble Lord; but I attribute it to the Noble Lord’s argument as a necessary inference. For what? Does not the Noble Lord assert, that capital punishment is in itself productive of salutary dread? Does he not triumphantly urge, that to deny the efficacy of capital punishment in deterring men from the commission of crimes, is repugnant to experience and common sense? Does he not, following the same line of argument, ask, whether the adoption of the present measure, by taking away the capital part of the punishment, would prove an encouragement or discouragement from the commission of the offence in question, obviously inferring that the former would be the consequence? Is not this the whole scope of the Noble and Learned Lord’s argument? And if so, does it not *necessarily* lead to that only conclusion which I have already stated? If the Noble and Learned Lord were asked, from the whole catalogue of venial crimes in our statute-book, to select the most venial, and to devise the most effectual means to prevent the commission of it, would he not have immediate recourse to the wholesome terrors of death? Does not his argument necessarily infer, that the best mode of preventing *any* offence would be to constitute it a capital

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crime? But unless the Noble and Learned Lord's argument goes to recommend the denunciation of death in every case as the best preventive of crime, I cannot understand it. At the same time, it is natural that the Noble and Learned Lord should shrink, with some degree of surprise at least, if not of abhorrence, from the establishment of this general rule. I can easily imagine that it must occur to the Noble and Learned Lord, that in every instance, except of very atrocious offences, a strong case ought to be made out, before the Legislature should venture to extend to such inferior instance the punishment of death. It must surely occur to the Noble and Learned Lord, that the general rule should be one which nature and humanity recommend; that the life of a fellow-creature should only be sacrificed, when forfeited by crimes from which all nature recoils; and that, if any exceptions be proposed to this rule, it should be insisted, as common feeling requires, that substantial reasons should be offered of urgent expediency, and of alarming danger, which might otherwise befall the community.'

THE LORD CHANCELLOR.—'I rise merely to explain, that I am misunderstood if it has been supposed that I have expressed any opinion as to the propriety of enacting the punishment of death for every species of offence.'

LORD GRENVILLE.—'I certainly did not suppose that such an opinion had been expressed or entertained by the Noble Lord. On the contrary, I have endeavoured—taking it for granted that this will not be the opinion of the Noble Lord—I have endeavoured to satisfy your Lordships of the fallacy of the Noble Lord's reasoning, by pointing out the consequences to which it must inevitably tend, that the punishment of death ought to be enacted against every offence.'

There is something well worth attention in the tenaciousness of the Lord Chancellor in the foregoing conversation as to the admission of the inference from his doctrine, that every offence ought to be visited with death, and in his backwardness to assign any reason why that inference should not be drawn. In fact, no reason could be assigned upon his principle. Either there is no limit to the infliction of capital punishment *in all cases whatever*, without stint or mercy, or the infliction must be perfectly capricious and arbitrary; or the limit, if there is one established or aimed at, cannot well be any other than that stated by Lord Grenville—the *fitness* of the punishment for the crime, or the standard of *natural justice*, judged of by the sentiments of the community, and of every man in it. There is not a man in the community who will say that he thinks it a crime of equal magnitude, or an injury that excites equal dread in his mind and that he is equally anxious to prevent, for another to enter his shop and steal articles from his counter of the value of five shillings, as to enter his house in the



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dead of night and take his life, or the lives of his family. Yet these crimes the law, as it stood, equally sentences to death. *Why* it should do so, in this particular instance, or why it should not level *all* distinctions of crimes in the same indiscriminate and sweeping proscription, is the question which Lord Grenville pressed on the Noble and Learned Lord on the Woolsack,—without receiving any answer.

That there are cases of extreme necessity which may supersede the rule of common feeling and natural justice, we agree with Lord Grenville in admitting; but we contend with his Lordship, that these extreme cases should be made out on the strongest grounds, and in the most unanswerable manner, so that the conviction of the necessity in the public mind may be as clear and full as the assent to the rule itself; and further, we conceive it of the highest importance, as a general principle, that the denunciations of the law should (as nearly as possible) conform to, and found themselves on, the rules of equity and humanity. A system of law, either not founded on the natural and common feeling of justice in the minds of the people, or professedly in contradiction to that feeling, must do all that in it lies to undermine and unsettle it. But it should certainly be the great aim of judicial enactments to co-operate with the natural sense of right and wrong; and to arm it with additional power and terror, in order to enforce its decisions and attain its ends:—not to reverse or set aside its decisions, and, by trampling on, or disregarding the original foundation and the great bulwark of social existence, to create a factitious, fallacious, impracticable security, out of an arbitrary, inconsistent, and merely *legal* sense of the artificial connexion between crimes and punishments. The law, in such an attempt, deprives itself of its surest and most powerful aid in the instincts and habits and sentiments of mankind. Instead of affixing its sanction to the dictates of the moral sense, it does what it can to neutralise it. It does not second, but thwart the good dispositions of the community; and lends a cover and an excuse to the bad. It loses its terror and its authority at once; because, not awarding its punishments according to the sense of guilt either in the mind of the public or of the offender, it no longer bears the stamp of Justice; and, being made only to answer a particular end, it fails of that end by not being carried into effect, and thus secures impunity to offenders. The brow of British Justice should reflect the sentiments engraven on the hearts of the community—grave, mild, firm, humane—not fickle, vindictive, contradictory and peevish. It would then carry awe into the minds of offenders, by corresponding with the dictates of their own consciences, and would be resorted to with cheerful confidence by those who wished to claim its protection, without having their feelings harrowed up by the threat or the execution of its decrees.

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In fact, any law constructed on merely automatic and artificial principles, and not actuated by the living spring of conscience in its bosom, and in the bosom of the community, is useless and injurious; is a stumbling-block in the path of justice; an unsightly deformity to the well-disposed; and an idle bugbear, speedily turned by the needy and desperate to mockery and contempt.

With these plain principles in our view, let us now look at the actual state of the law and practice of the country in this respect: and we cannot give our readers a better idea of it, than by quoting the words of a Speech of Sir Samuel Romilly on this subject, March 25th, 1818. We find them thus reported.

‘Sir S. Romilly stated, that he rose for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal so much of the Act as took away the benefit of clergy from persons convicted of stealing goods, wares, or merchandise, to the value of five shillings, in any house, shop, warehouse, stable, &c. He called their attention to the returns which for some days had been on the table, in order to show what the state of the law was on the subject. From 1805 to 1817, a period of twelve years, 655 persons had been indicted for the offence under consideration. Of these, only 113 had been capitally convicted; and of those 113, not one had been executed:—365 out of the 655 had been found guilty by the juries before whom they were tried, of simple larceny, by which the capital part of the charge was taken away. It was evident, therefore, either that these 365 persons had been improperly charged with a capital offence, or that the juries, influenced no doubt by feelings of humanity, had, in 365 cases, violated their oaths. It was true, that there were high authorities in justification of a jury thus acting. Mr. Justice Blackstone stated, that a jury who brought in a verdict of guilty to an amount less than the evidence established, with a view to avoid capitally convicting the accused person, might be justified on the ground that they had a right to take into their consideration the difference in the value of money between the present period and that at which the statute was enacted. This, however, he (Sir S. Romilly) should always contend, was a practice which had a most immoral tendency; and the temptations to it, he should always maintain, it was the duty of the Legislature to remove. He would take the present opportunity of mentioning the state of the law, as derived from the returns on the table, with respect to the act making it capital to steal within a dwelling-house to the amount of forty shillings. Within eight years, down to 1816, no less than 1097 persons had been tried for this offence. Of these, 293 only had been capitally convicted, and *not one* had been executed! In 1816, 131 more persons had been tried, of whom 49 had been capitally convicted, and *one* (whose case was accompanied with great aggrava-

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tions) executed. So that of 1228 individuals tried, 342 only had been capitally convicted (the juries either acquitting the 886, or finding them guilty of stealing to a less amount), and only one person executed ! Was this a state of the law which it was desirable to continue ?—(*Hear, hear*). It was important, also, that the House should direct their attention to the state of the law as it respected some other capital offences, besides those which he had already specified. The principle on which the law was administered with respect to the offences he had already specified, was, that the law should generally not be enforced, but be enforced only in particular cases. In another part of the administration of the law, this principle was reversed—the law was generally enforced, and was not enforced only in particular cases. He alluded to the offences of fraudulent bankruptcy and forgery. It had been thought wise, by those who were intrusted with the execution of the law, to extend mercy in cases of fraudulent bankruptcy in only one instance ; and that was under circumstances so peculiar, that to have withheld pardon would have been an act of the grossest injustice. He was sure that every man conversant with the bankrupt laws knew, that not a year passed without the occurrence of a great number of fraudulent bankruptcies. Nevertheless, during eighty-five years, there had been but four capital convictions for this offence ; numerous frauds to a great amount having been suffered to escape with complete impunity, because the parties injured saw no alternative between that course and the shedding of blood—(*Hear, hear, hear !*) The same system was pursued with respect to the crime of forgery. Formerly, pardons for this offence were very rare. Lately, however, the offence had so multiplied, in consequence of the great increase of paper currency (both that of the Bank of England and provincial), that it was impossible to adhere to the system of never pardoning the crime. Still, however, the principle existed, that, in most cases, the law should be enforced ; and that in comparatively few (and those under peculiar circumstances of extenuation) it should not be so. A considerable discretion had been vested in the Bank of England on this subject ; a discretion which, he believed, had been judiciously and humanely executed, and the consequence of which was, that prosecutions had only taken place in aggravated cases. But the uncertainty of punishment which this occasioned, destroyed all the advantage that might be supposed to result from the severity with which the law was generally enforced. He was persuaded, that the frequent punishment of forgery by death excited a strong feeling of compassion on the part of the public towards the sufferers. Indeed, some examples of this punishment were extremely shocking. That day se'ennight two women had been executed for forgery ; and that very morning two boys, 16 and 17 years of age, would have been executed

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for the same crime, had it not been for the exertions of a worthy magistrate and an honourable friend of his, who had detected a conspiracy for the purpose of their seduction, and who had successfully pressed a recommendation for a suspension of their punishment. Was it possible that such spectacles as these could have any other effect than to produce, not obedience to the law, but compassion for the violators of it? The fact was, that forgeries had greatly increased. Nothing could be more certain than that, if the sanction of the law was insufficient to prevent the crime, it was calculated to produce the worst effects. There was not only the loss of lives, but the deterioration of moral feeling, which such exhibitions were calculated to occasion.'

To the same effect, and long before, we have the sentiments of no less eminent an authority than Sir W. Blackstone, who, in his Commentaries, explicitly declares—

'Yet though, in this instance, we may glory in the wisdom of the English law, we shall find it more difficult to justify the frequency of capital punishment to be found therein; inflicted (perhaps inattentively) by a multitude of successive independent statutes, upon crimes very different in their natures. It is a melancholy truth, that among the variety of actions which men are daily liable to commit, no less than *an hundred and sixty* have been declared by act of Parliament to be felonies without benefit of clergy; or, in other words, to be worthy of instant death. So dreadful a list, *instead of diminishing, increases the number of offenders*. The injured, through compassion, will forbear to prosecute; juries, through compassion, will sometimes forget their oaths, and either acquit the guilty, or mitigate the offence; and judges, through compassion, will respite one-half of the convicts, and recommend them to the Royal mercy. Among so many chances of escaping, the needy and hardened offender overlooks the multitude that suffer; he boldly engages in some desperate attempt to relieve his wants, or supply his vices; and if, unexpectedly, the hand of justice overtakes him, he deems himself peculiarly unfortunate in falling at last a sacrifice to those laws which long impunity has taught him to contemn.'

Such is the picture drawn of our law, by two of its greatest ornaments and ablest interpreters. We proceed to lay before our readers, from the printed Report, the views entertained by the Committee on this subject—the general scope of the evidence by which they have been guided—and the practical results to which their recommendations and suggestions have already led. The general statements of their objects, and of the mode by which they have thought it best to endeavour to attain them, is to be found in the following eminently able and truly interesting summary.

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‘They (the Committee) wish expressly to disclaim all doubt of *the right* of the Legislature to inflict the punishment of Death, wherever that punishment, and that alone, seems capable of protecting the community from enormous and atrocious crimes. The object of the Committee has been, to ascertain, as far as the nature of the case admitted, by Evidence, whether, in the present state of the sentiments of the people of England, Capital Punishment, in most cases of offences unattended with violence, be a necessary, or even the most effectual security against the prevalence of crimes.

‘I. In the first place, they endeavoured to collect official accounts of the state of Crimes, and the administration of Criminal Law throughout the kingdom, from the earliest period to which authentic information reaches. The Annual Returns of Commitments, Convictions, and Executions, first procured by Addresses from this House, and since required by Statute, go no farther back than 1805. Accounts, though not perfectly satisfactory, of the same particulars, from London and Middlesex, from 1749 to the present time, have been already laid before Parliament, which, with an official summary of the Returns of England and Wales from 1805, will be inserted in the Appendix of this Report.

‘A full and authentic account of Convictions and Executions for London and Middlesex, from 1699 to 1804, obtained, for the latter part of that time, from the Clerk of Arraignment at the Old Bailey, and for the former part from the officers of the city of London, is inserted in the Appendix. The Corporation of the City of London have shown, on this occasion, a liberality and public spirit worthy of acknowledgment; and it is to be hoped that they will continue their researches as far back as their Records extend, and thus complete Returns, probably unparalleled in the history of Criminal Law.

‘The Deputy Clerk of Assize for the Home Circuit has laid before Your Committee a Return of Commitments, Convictions and Executions on that Circuit, which comprehends the counties of Herts, Essex, Kent, Sussex and Surrey, from 1689 to 1718; from 1755 to 1784; and from 1784 to 1814. The Returns of the intermediate period from 1718 to 1755 he will doubtless furnish very soon. From this important Return it appears, that, for the first thirty years which followed the Revolution, the average proportion of convictions to executions was 38 to 20; that from 1755 to 1784 it was 46 to 13; and that from 1784 to 1814 it was 74 to 19. It is worthy of remark, that the whole number of convictions for murder, on the Home Circuit, in the first period, was 123, and the executions for the same period were 87; that in the second, the convictions for the same offence were 67, and the executions 57; and that in the third, the convictions were 54, and the executions 44. If the increase of the population, during a pros-

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perous period of a hundred and thirty years, be taken into the account, and if we bear in mind that, within that time, a considerable city has grown up on the southern bank of the Thames, we shall be disposed to consider it as no exaggeration to affirm, that in this district (not one of the most favourably situated in this respect) murder has abated in the remarkable proportion of three, if not four to one.

‘ In the thirty years from 1755 to 1784, the whole convictions for murder, in London and Middlesex, were 71 : and in the thirty years from 1784 to 1814, they were 66. In the years 1815, 1816, and 1817, the whole convictions for murder in London were 9, while in the three preceding years they were 14. Most of the other returns relate to too short a period, or too narrow a district, to afford materials for safe conclusion, with respect to the comparative frequency of crimes at different periods.

‘ In general, however, it appears that Murders, and other crimes of violence and cruelty, have either diminished, or not increased ; and that the deplorable increase of Criminals is not of such a nature as to indicate any diminution in the *humanity* of the people. The practice of immediately publishing the circumstances of every atrocious crime, and of circulating, in various forms, an account of every stage of the proceedings which relate to it, is far more prevalent in England than in any other country, and in our times, than in any former age. It is, on the whole, of great utility, not only as a control on courts of judicature, but also as a means of rendering it extremely difficult for odious criminals to escape. In this country, no atrocious crimes remain secret ; with these advantages, however, it cannot be denied that, by publishing the circumstances of all crimes, our modern practice tends to make our age and nation *appear* more criminal than, in comparison with others, it really *is*.

‘ II. In considering the subject of our Penal Laws, Your Committee will first lay before the House their observations on that part which is the least likely to give rise to difference of opinion. That many statutes denouncing capital punishments might be safely and wisely repealed, has long been a prevalent opinion. It is sanctioned by the authority of two successive Committees of this House, composed of the most eminent men of their age, and, in some measure, by the authority of the House itself, which passed several bills on the recommendation of their Committees. As a general position, the propriety of repealing such statutes seems scarcely to have been disputed ; respecting the number and choice of them, different sentiments must always be expected. Your Committee have not attempted a complete enumeration, which much time and considerable deliberation would be required to accomplish. They selected some capital felonies, for

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the continuance of which they cannot anticipate any serious argument, and which seem to them to serve no purpose but that of incumbering and discrediting the Statute Book. Various considerations have combined to guide their choice; sometimes mere levity and hurry have raised an insignificant offence, or an almost indifferent act, into a capital crime; in other cases, the evil has been manifestly, and indeed avowedly temporary, though it unfortunately produced a permanent law. Where the punishment of death was evidently unnecessary at the time of its original establishment, and where, if it was originally justified by a temporary danger, or excused by a temporary fear, it has long been acknowledged to be altogether disproportioned to the offence, Your Committee conceive themselves warranted in confidently recommending its abolition. But they have also adverted to another consideration. If, in addition to the intrinsic evidence of unwarrantable severity in a law, which arises from the comparison of the act forbidden with the punishment threatened, they find also, that the law has scarcely ever been executed since its first enactment; or, if it has fallen into disuse, as the Nation became more humane and generally enlightened, Your Committee conceive themselves authorized to recommend its repeal, by long experience, and by the deliberate judgment of the whole Nation. In the application of this latter principle, they have been materially aided by the documents which have been mentioned. Where a Penal Law has not been carried into effect in Middlesex for more than a century, in the counties round London for sixty years, and in the extensive district which forms the Western Circuit for fifty, it may be safely concluded, that the general opinion has pronounced it to be unfit, or unnecessary to continue it in force. The Committee are aware, that there are cases in which it may be said that the dread of punishment has prevented the perpetration of the crime, and where, therefore, the law appears to be inefficacious, only because it has completely accomplished its purpose. Whatever speciousness may belong to this reasoning, in the case of conspicuous crimes, and punishments generally present to the minds of men, it never can be plausibly applied to rare and obscure offences, to penal enactments, of which it requires a more than ordinary share of professional accuracy habitually to recollect the existence. Your Committee have endeavoured to avoid all cases which seem to them to be on this ground disputable. From general caution, and a desire to avoid even the appearance of precipitation, they have postponed cases, which seem to them liable to as little doubt as some of those to which they are about to advert.

‘It has sometimes been said, that the abolition of penal laws which have fallen into actual disuse, is of little advantage to the community.

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Your Committee consider this opinion as an error. They forbear to enlarge on the striking remark of Lord Bacon, that all such laws weaken and disarm the other parts of the criminal system. The frequent occurrence of the unexpected threat of Death in a criminal code, tends to rob that punishment of all its terrors, and to enervate the general authority of the Government and the Laws. The multiplication of this threat in the Laws of England, has brought on them, and on the Nation, a character of harshness and cruelty, which evidence of a mild administration of them will not entirely remove. Repeal silences the objection. Reasoning founded on lenient exercise of authority, whatever its force may be, is not calculated to efface a general and deep impression. The removal of disused laws is a preliminary operation, which greatly facilitates a just estimate, and (where it is necessary) an effectual reform of those laws which are to remain in activity. Were capital punishments reduced to the comparatively small number of cases in which they are often inflicted, it would become a much simpler operation to form a right judgment of their propriety or necessity. Another consideration, of still greater moment, presents itself on this part of the subject. Penal Laws are sometimes called into activity after long disuse, and in cases where their very-existence may be unknown to the best informed part of the community. Malicious prosecutors set them in motion. A mistaken administration of the Law may apply them to purposes for which they were not intended, and which they are calculated more to defeat than to promote. Such seems to have been the case of the person who, in the year 1814, at the Assizes for Essex, was capitally convicted of the offence of cutting down trees, and who, in spite of earnest applications for mercy from the prosecutor, the committing magistrate, and the whole neighbourhood, was executed, apparently because he was believed to be habitually engaged in *other* offences, for none of which, however, he had been convicted or tried.

‘ This case is not quoted as furnishing any charge against the humanity of the Judge, or of the advisers of the Crown ; they certainly acted according to the dictates of their judgment : but it is a case where the effect of punishment is sufficiently shown, by the evidence, to be the reverse of exemplary ; and it is hard to say, whether the general disuse of the capital punishment in this offence, or the single instance in which it has been carried into effect, suggests the strongest reasons for its abolition.

‘ The Statutes creating capital felonies, which the Committee have considered under this head, are reducible to two classes. The First relates to acts, either so nearly indifferent as to require no penalty, or, if injurious, not of such a magnitude as that they may not safely be left



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punishable as Misdemeanors at common law. In these Your Committee propose the simple repeal. They are as follows—

- ‘ 1. 1 & 2 Phil. & Mary, c. 4. Egyptians remaining within the kingdom one month.
- 2. 18 Cha. II. c. 3. Notorious thieves in Cumberland and Northumberland.
- 3. 9 Geo. I. c. 22. Being armed and disguised in any Forest, Park, &c.
- 4. — — in any Warren.
- 5. — — in any High Road, Open Heath, Common, or Down.
- 6. — — Unlawfully hunting, killing, or stealing Deer.
- 7. — — Robbing Warrens, &c.
- 8. — — Stealing or taking *any* Fish out of any River, Pond, &c.
- 9. — — Hunting in his Majesty’s Forests or Chases.
- 10. — — Breaking down the Head or Mound of a Fish Pond.
- 11. 9 Geo. I. c. 28. Being disguised within the Mint.
- 12. 12 Geo. II. c. 29. Injuring of Westminster Bridge, and other Bridges, by other Acts.

‘ The Second Class consists of those offences, which, though in the opinion of your Committee never fit to be punished with Death, are yet so malignant and dangerous as to require the highest punishments, except death, which are known to our laws. These the Committee would make punishable, either by Transportation or Imprisonment with hard labour, allowing considerable scope to the discretion of the Judges respecting the term for which either punishment is to endure.

- 1. 31 Eliz. c. 9. Taking away any Maid, Widow, or Wife, &c.
- 2. 21 Jac. I. c. 26. Acknowledging or procuring any Fine, Recovery, &c.
- 3. 4 Geo. I. c. 11. § 4. Obstructing the recovery of Stolen Goods.
- 4. 9 Geo. I. c. 22. Maliciously killing or wounding Cattle.
- 5. 9 Geo. I. c. 22. Cutting down or destroying Trees growing.
- 6. 5 Geo. II. c. 30. Bankrupts not surrendering, &c.
- 7. — — Concealing or embezzling.
- 8. 6 Geo. II. c. 37. Cutting down the bank of any River.
- 9. 8 Geo. II. c. 20. Destroying any Fence, Lock, Sluice, &c.
- 10. 26 Geo. II. c. 23. Making a false entry in a Marriage Register, &c. Five Felonies.
- 11. 27 Geo. II. c. 13. Sending threatening Letters.

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12. 27 Geo. II. c. 19. Destroying Banks, &c. on Bedford Level.
13. 3 Geo. III. c. 16. Personating Out-Pensioners of Greenwich Hospital.
14. 22 Geo. III. c. 40. Maliciously cutting Serges.
15. 24 Geo. III. c. 47. Harbours offenders against that (Revenue) Act, when returned from Transportation.

‘ It does not seem necessary to make any observation in this place on the punishments of Transportation and Imprisonment, which your Committee have proposed to substitute for that of Death, in the second of the two classes above mentioned. In their present imperfect state, they are sufficient for such offences; and, in the more improved condition in which the Committee trust that all the prisons of the Kingdom will soon be placed, Imprisonment may be hoped to be of such a nature as to answer every purpose of terror and reformation.

‘ III. In the more disputable questions which relate to offences of more frequent occurrence and more extensive mischief, your Committee will limit their present practical conclusions to those cases to which the evidence before them most distinctly refers. They cannot entertain any doubt, that the general principles which have been so strikingly verified and corroborated in some particular cases by that evidence, apply with equal force to many others, relating to which they have not had sufficient time to collect the testimony of witnesses. That some offences which the law treats as Arson, and more which it punishes as Burglary, are not properly classed with these crimes, and ought not to be punished with Death, would probably be rendered apparent by a legislative consolidation of the laws in being respecting Arson and Burglary. The same result, though in a less degree, might be expected from a similar operation in other important heads of Criminal Law.

‘ On the three capital felonies—of Privately stealing in a shop to the amount of five shillings—of privately stealing in a dwelling-house to the amount of forty shillings—and of Privately stealing from vessels in a navigable river to the amount of forty shillings—the House of Commons have pronounced their opinion, by passing Bills for reducing the punishment to Transportation or Imprisonment.

‘ In proposing to revive those Bills, Your Committee feel a singular satisfaction that they are enabled to present to the House so considerable a body of direct evidence, in support of opinions which had hitherto chiefly rested on general reasoning, and were often alleged, by their opponents, to be contradicted by experience. Numerous and respectable witnesses have borne testimony, for themselves and for the classes whom they represent, that a great reluctance prevails to prosecute, to

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give evidence, and to convict, in the cases of the three last mentioned offences ; and that this reluctance had the effect of producing impunity to such a degree, that it might be considered as among the temptations to the commission of crimes. Your Committee beg leave to direct the attention of the House to the evidence of Sir Archibald Macdonald, on this and other parts of the general subject, in which that venerable person has stated the result of many years experience in the administration of Criminal Law. They forbore to desire the opinion of the present Judges, out of consideration to the station and duties of these respectable magistrates. It appeared unbecoming and inconvenient, that those whose office it is to execute the Criminal Law, should be called on to give an opinion whether it ought to be altered. . . . But, highly as the Committee esteem and respect the Judges, it is not from them that the most accurate and satisfactory evidence of the effect of the Penal Law can reasonably be expected. They only see the exterior of criminal proceedings after they are brought into a court of justice. Of the cases which never appear there, and of the causes which prevent their appearance, they can know nothing. Of the motives which influence the testimony of witnesses, they can form but a hasty and inadequate estimate. Even in the grounds of Verdicts, they may often be deceived. From any opportunity of observing the influence of punishment upon those Classes of men among whom malefactors are most commonly found, the Judges are, by their stations and duties, placed at a great distance.

‘Your Committee accordingly have sought for evidence on these subjects from those classes of men who *are sufferers* from Larcenies, who must be *prosecutors* when those Larcenies are brought to trial, who are the *witnesses* by whom such charges must be substantiated, and who are the *Jurors*, by whose verdicts only effect can be given to the laws. On this class of persons, where the crimes are most frequent, and where long and extensive experience allows little room for error, and none for misrepresentation ; or, in other words, on the Traders of the City of London and Westminster, Your Committee have principally relied for information. To the clerks at the offices of Magistrates, and to the officers of criminal courts, who receive informations and prepare indictments, to experienced Magistrates themselves, and to the gaolers and others who, in the performance of their duties, have constant opportunities of observing the feelings of offenders, the Committee have also directed their inquiries ; and their testimony has been perfectly uniform.’

The Report then proceeds to allude to the most material evidence on this part of the subject ; and concludes with adverting to the Law respecting *Forgery*, as the fourth and last head.

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‘ IV. Much of the above evidence sufficiently establishes the general disinclination of traders to prosecute for forgeries on themselves, or to furnish the Bank of England with the means of conviction, in cases where forged notes are uttered. There is no offence in which the infliction of death seems more repugnant to the strong and general and declared sense of the Public, than forgery ; there is no other in which there appears to prevail a greater compassion for the offender, and more horror at capital executions.’

After a summary of the evidence on this head, they proceed—

‘ After due consideration of this important question, Your Committee are of opinion, that Forgeries are a class of offences, respecting which it is expedient to bring together and methodize the laws now in being ; that in the present state of public feeling, a reduction of the punishment, in most cases of that crime, *is become necessary to the execution of the laws*, and consequently to the security of property and the protection of commerce ; and that the means adopted by the Legislature to return to our ancient standard of value, render the reformation of the Criminal Laws respecting forgeries, a matter of very considerable urgency. Private forgeries will, in the opinion of the Committee, be sufficiently and most effectually repressed by the punishments of Transportation and Imprisonment. As long as the smaller notes of the Bank of England shall continue to constitute the principal part of the circulating medium of the kingdom, it may be reasonable to place them on the same footing with the metallic currency. Your Committee therefore propose, that the *forgery* of these notes may for the present remain a capital offence ; that the *uttering* of forged bank notes shall, for the first offence, be Transportation or Imprisonment ; but that, on the second conviction, the offender shall be deemed to be a common utterer of forged notes, and shall, if the prosecutor shall so desire, be indicted as such, which will render him liable to capital punishment. Respecting the offence of *knowingly possessing* forged notes, Your Committee have no alteration to suggest, but what they conceive could be fit in all transportable offences, that a discretion should be vested in the Judges to substitute Imprisonment with hard labour for Transportation, where such a substitution shall seem to them expedient.

‘ Your Committee will conclude by informing the House, that in pursuance of the various opinions and recommendations which they have stated above, they have instructed their Chairman, early in the next Session of Parliament, to move for leave to bring in a Bill, for the objects and purposes, of which this Report is intended to explain the nature, and to prove the fitness.’

It is truly gratifying to see a Legislative Body thus feeling and thus

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acting :—to see those who, from their rank and place in society, have the power to confer serious and lasting benefits on the community, deliberating as it were in the presence, and under the sanction of the wise and good of former ages ; availing themselves of the light which the most thoughtful minds have thrown upon the subject of their consideration ; breathing that spirit of humanity which naturally emanates from those inquiries which have for their object the good of our country and our kind ; blending practical information and strict caution with enlarged philosophic views ; and embodying the suggestions of a sound understanding of the question (in principle and in detail) in a mild, temperate, and gradual plan of reform. Nothing indeed can be more striking, in the tone and proposed alterations of the foregoing Report, than its moderation, and its avoiding every approach to rash and groundless innovation. Yet it has not been able to escape misrepresentation and cavils. It has gone forth to the world, that the Committee propose to abolish capital punishment altogether, and to substitute transportation and imprisonment as the most effectual security against *every crime*. They have done no such thing. On the contrary, they distinctly disclaim any such idea in the outset of their Report ; and the observation on which this interpretation has been put, is obviously limited to a class of offences, just before expressly proposed to be excepted from the punishment of death, and for which ‘it is hoped an improved system of imprisonment may answer every purpose of terror and reformation.’ It has also been argued, that they propose to repeal simply, and as ‘so much statutory lumber,’ the acts against a class of offences, which they distinctly state (though unfit to be punished with death), yet to be of so malignant and dangerous a tendency, ‘as to require the highest punishments except death known to our laws ;’ and which they accordingly recommend to be substituted for capital punishment. They have been accused of violating decorum and consistency, because they declare capital executions for forgery to be highly unpopular and repugnant to the general feeling, without daring (from the supposed difficulty and importance of the question) to propose their immediate repeal. The mention of this general and declared repugnance to capital punishment in these cases, as one circumstance weighing most strongly, and speaking most loudly against its continuance, is set down as a mark of ‘deference to popular clamour, to the shout of a mob, or of a gang of accomplices at the foot of the gallows ;’ though this sentiment is *proved* at large, in the Evidence, to be shared generally by the prosecutors themselves, and by the rest of the community. And, finally, the Committee are accused of packing the Evidence, and tampering with it in the examinations ; because the great body of that evidence is uniformly in harmony

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with the general feelings of humanity, with common opinion, and with all enlightened theory on the subject ; because the witnesses now are said to be all of the same way of thinking, and now to vary in every one of their opinions ; because they are persons who seem to have paid some attention, and to have taken some interest in the question beforehand, and are therefore *ex parte* evidence ; because they have only one lawyer among them, and not a whole list of practising attorneys, nor ‘ a single shareholder in any bridge, canal, or mining company ; ’ because the whole mercantile, agricultural, and banking interest has not been summoned to establish the facts upon a permanent basis, and to make it impossible ever to arrive at any conclusion from them !

Now, if these things are really so—if it be true that there are only sixty-seven persons, of limited information and suspicious motives, got together, without reference to their profession or the place of their abode, to undermine the substantial interests of 1000 and odd bankers, and 100,000 merchants and others in town and country, and to set up a theory of their own in the teeth of fact and law, it is strange that not a single individual of so large and respectable a body has put forth any remonstrance, public or private, against this preposterous assumption of their authority, and virtual representation of their sentiments. Yet not one has come forward. We have not heard a whisper of complaint from any such quarter. We turn then at once from such contemptible sophistry to the evidence : and beg very shortly to consider it with reference, first, to facts ; and, secondly, to matters of opinion. As to the first class of rare and obsolete offences proposed to be done away, or to be left as common misdemeanours, there is in general no evidence brought. With respect to the Black Act, and the Act of the 12 Geo. II., making it capital to injure Westminster-Bridge, the following striking particulars are stated by Sir Archibald Macdonald.

‘ Among the list of unclergyable felonies, there are a great number that were thought necessary at the time when enacted, but which are now no longer so : for instance, the persons who damage Westminster, Fulham, or London Bridges, if convicted, must receive sentence of death. The Black Act is full of unclergyable felonies, many of which were made on an immediate occasion, but still continue in force. There is one instance, which perhaps may be a good specimen of many of the others : there are about twenty felonies in that act ; and one of them is, I believe, correctly in these words—“ Appearing on a high road, or on a common, &c. with the face black, or being otherwise disguised.” It so happened, that, on the first establishment of turn-pikes, there was great opposition to them. In Herefordshire, a great number of persons had got together, masked and disguised, and were

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opposed by the Magistrates on the road, and were apprehended. It came out in evidence, that their object was to have pulled down the turnpike gate. Lord Hardwicke tried the men, during the short time that he was Chief-Justice; and he told the Jury, that "every crime specified in that act was a distinct and separate crime; they had no connexion one with the other. But although it might be right enough to let in the evidence of the intent, yet that which the Jury had to look to, was entirely independent of that circumstance. The words were, *appearing with a black face, or otherwise disguised, upon the road.* Did the prisoners, or not, so appear?" The men were convicted on that point only, and ordered for execution; but whether executed or not, the report of the case does not state. The momentary depredations on Waltham and other Forests, were, no doubt, the cause of that act; they have long since ceased; but the act is still in force. So, with respect to the bridges, I apprehend the acts with respect to the bridges were enacted in consequence of the watermen being injured in their business, and therefore doing damage to the bridges; but those bridges are now, I believe, as sacred as the Church of St. Paul.' P. 50.

We here see an example of the effects of this miscellaneous style of legislating. A law is made with a particular and express reference to a notorious and complicated description of offence, and afterwards left standing in the abstract, so that it may be applied, at the discretion of the Judge, to innocent or indifferent acts. A man might be hanged, by one of the foregoing acts, for being seen coming from a masquerade disguised in a domino. This has been called providing against unforeseen emergencies; and so it is, with a vengeance! Upon the same principle, we have only to make every ordinary circumstance of life, such as walking the street, or looking out of a coach-window, capital; and then we may catch and hang whomever we please, when it suits the service of the State.—It appears in evidence, under the second class of offences, that a man named James Potter was hanged, no longer ago than 1814, for cutting down some young trees! and, though pressing applications were made for mercy *by the prosecutor*, the committing Magistrate, and the whole neighbourhood, they were refused. The plea was, that the man was *a reputed thief*.

We shall take the following, from Mr. Evans's valuable evidence, as a curious instance to show the barbarous nicety of our old laws in many particulars. It relates to the history of what is called *Benefit of Clergy*.

'In comparing the laws, and adverting to the progress of the law with respect to different subjects which now are capital, and have been so formerly, I think it is by no means immaterial to attend to the history of the law with respect to Benefit of Clergy, which, until the reign of

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Queen Anne, was not, as it is now, a mere nominal and formal distinction, and which, so lately as the reign of Charles II., we find was evidently practically attended to; as appears particularly by a Report which I have in my hand, as well as from some of the statutes enacted in the course of that reign. The book to which I allude, is the Reports of Cases in Pleas of the Crown, adjudged and determined in the reign of the late King Charles II.; collected by Chief-Justice Kelyng. In that book there is the Report of a case, in which the Ordinary, being disposed to report that the thief who was under trial could read, the Judge, suspecting that he could not, watched him, and, finding that it was as he suspected, censured and fined the Ordinary. The case is this: "At the Assizes at Winchester, the Clerk appointed by the Bishop to give Clergy to the prisoners being to give it to an old thief, I directed him to deal clearly with me, and not to say *Legit*, in case he could not read; and thereupon he delivered the book to him; and I perceived the prisoner never looked upon the book at all; and yet the Bishop's Clerk, upon the demand of *Legit*, or *Non Legit*, answered *Legit*; and thereupon I wished him to consider, and told him I doubted he was mistaken; and bid the clerk of the assizes ask him again, *Legit*, or *Non legit*? and he answered again something angrily, *Legit*. Then I bid the clerk of the assize not to record it; and I told the parson he was not the judge whether he read or not, but a ministerial officer to make a true report to the Court: and so I caused the prisoner to be brought near, and delivered him the book, and then the prisoner confessed he could not read; whereupon I told the parson he reproached his function, and *unpreached more that day than he could preach up again in many days!* And because it was his personal offence and misdemeanor, I fined him 5 marks, and did not fine the Bishop, as in case he had failed to provide an Ordinary." It does not appear what became of the prisoner in this case. There is also another case, which I may cite from the same book, to show that the Court judge of reading, and not the Ordinary; and it refers to the 9th of Edw. IV., chap. 28. It is this: "One demands his Clergy, and the Court took the book, and turned him to a verse, and he could not read *well*, but read one word in one place, and another word in another place. And the Judges asked the Ordinary, if he would have him, and he answered, Yea. The Judges bid him consider, and told him the Court was to judge of his reading; and if the Court should judge he did not read, the Ordinary should be fined, and the prisoner hanged, notwithstanding his demanding of him; and *he was hanged.*" The 22d and 23d of Charles II. chap. 7, which respects the burning of houses and stacks of corn and hay, and the killing and maiming of cattle, directs, that the party guilty of those offences shall be deemed a felon, and the offender shall



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suffer, as in cases of felony, without saying "Without benefit of Clergy ;" and therefore gives a prisoner an option to avoid judgment of death, or execution thereupon, to be transported for seven years ; which is a proof that clergyable felony was then considered as an offence that might be practically attended with capital punishment.' P. 30.

Under the third and fourth Heads, respecting Larcenies and Forgery, the evidence, showing the inefficient state of our laws from their over-severity, is full, and nearly uniform. We shall give the outline of it in the words of the Committee.

' Mr. Skelton, who has been *near forty years* Clerk of Arraignment at the Old Bailey, states, that Juries are anxious to reduce the value of property below its real amount, in those larcenies where the capital punishment depends on value ; that they are desirous of omitting those circumstances on which the capital punishment depends in constructive burglaries ; and that a reluctance to convict is perceptible in forgery.

' Sir Archibald Macdonald bears testimony to the reluctance of prosecutors, witnesses and juries, in forgeries, in shop-lifting, and offences of like nature. He believes that the chances of escape are *greatly increased* by the severity of the punishments. Against treason, murder, arson, rape, and crimes against the dwelling-house or person, and some others, he thinks the punishment of Death should be directed.

' Mr. Newman, solicitor for the city of London, speaking from *thirty years' experience* of the course of Criminal Prosecutions in that city, informed the Committee that he had frequently observed a reluctance to prosecute and convict, in capital offences not directed against the lives, persons, or dwellings of men.

' The Reverend Mr. Cotton, Ordinary of Newgate, has described in strong terms the repugnance of the public to capital execution, in offences unattended with violence ; and the acquiescence, even of the most depraved classes, in their infliction in atrocious crimes.

' Mr. Newman, late keeper of Newgate, and connected with the administration of justice in London for *forty years*, gave testimony to the same effect.

' Mr. Hobler, clerk to the Lord Mayor, and to the sitting magistrates in London for *thirty years*, stated the anxiety of prosecutors to lower the value of goods stolen ; and has observed many cases of forgery, in which, after the clearest evidence before the magistrate, the Grand Jury has thrown out the bill, for some reason or other, where the magistrate had no doubt. The same solicitude to reduce the value of articles privately stolen in shops and dwelling-houses, has been remarked by Mr. Payne, clerk to the sitting magistrate at Guildhall ; by Mr. Yardley, clerk at the office in Worship-street, who has observed a disinclination to prosecute in all capital cases, except murder ; and

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who says, that in larcenies he has often heard prosecutors, especially females, say, "I hope it is not a hanging matter:" and by Mr. Thomson, clerk at the office in Whitechapel, who represents it as common for prosecutors in larcenies to ask, "Cannot this be put under forty shillings?"

'Mr. Josiah Conder, bookseller, Mr. Joseph Curtis, currier, Mr. Wendover Fry, type-founder, and Mr. John Gaun, a merchant and shoe manufacturer, stated instances in which they were prevented by the capital punishment from prosecuting offenders, whom they would have brought to justice if the punishment had, in their opinion, been more proportioned to the crime. They also declared, that there is a general disinclination to prosecute among the traders of the city of London, or to convict in thefts without violence, and in forgeries.

'Mr. James Soaper of St. Helen's Place, Mr. Ebenezer Johnson of Bishopsgate-street, ironmonger, Mr. Baker of the Tower, Mr. Lewis, a retired merchant, and Mr. Garrett, an insurance-broker, bore testimony to the general repugnance to prosecution which arose from capital punishment. Some of them mentioned instances in which they had been deterred by that consideration from bringing offenders to justice. Mr. Garrett said, that as far as his observation went, there was not one in twenty who did not shudder at the idea of inflicting the capital punishment in cases of forgery. Messrs. Frederic and William Thornhill mentioned cases of theft in which they had forborne to prosecute, on account of the punishment of Death. The former added, that he found it to be an almost universal sentiment among his neighbours and acquaintance, that excessive punishment tends very greatly to the production of crime; that he knows many persons who have been great sufferers by thefts in shops and dwelling-houses, and who declare, that if the punishment of such offences had been any thing less than death, they would have regarded it as highly criminal to have forborne prosecution, which they had felt themselves compelled to abstain from in every instance, on account of the punishment; and must continue to act on the same principle of forbearance till there was an amendment in the law.'

On the theory of the proposed amelioration in the Penal Law, the evidence of Mr. Basil Montagu is given at much length, and evinces great research, ingenuity, and zeal. It makes almost a pamphlet, or what Mr. Cobbett would call 'a nice little book' on the subject: but we can no longer make room for more than a very brief abstract of its contents. That learned and excellent person first goes into a considerable and very curious detail, to show how far, and with that miserable effects, the experiment of extreme severity, as by torture and agonizing deaths, had been carried in ancient times, and in some

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modern nations; and then makes several curious quotations from English publications, from 1712 to 1814, in which additional and increased rigour was recommended, in the system as well as the execution of our own penal law. He then states an overwhelming multitude of facts, from the undoubted evidence of records, to show how opposite the practical effects of those rigorous enactments has been from what was intended;—and finally explains and illustrates *the principle* upon which the efficacy of punishment in any case must depend. ‘Crime,’ he observes, ‘is prevented, not solely by legal enactment, but by the *joint* operation of three powers;—the *legal* power, or the fear of punishment awarded by law—the *moral* power, or the fear of the censure of the community—and the power of *religion*, or the fear of divine vengeance:—*upon duly poising these*, I conceive the efficacy of all laws depends. When these powers UNITE, their effect is the greatest possible—when they OPPOSE each other, their separate efficacy is proportionally diminished.’ This principle is then sifted and illustrated with the greatest possible ingenuity and candour; and some excellent observations are added, on the erroneous opinion, that men are influenced in moments of temptation by cool calculation as to the probable consequences of their yielding. ‘Crimes,’ it is truly and profoundly remarked, ‘proceed not from *reason*, but from *passion*—and by passion must they be prevented.’ This is afterwards applied to the cases of Fraudulent Bankruptcy, larceny, and forgery. But we must pause a little upon the general maxims we have just extracted.

‘Crimes,’ says Mr. Montagu, ‘proceed not from Reason, but from Passion, and by passion they must be prevented; that is, by keeping up in the community a sentiment of disapprobation of the act, and in the person disposed to commit it, a tendency immediately to recoil from the thought, without any calculation at all.’ We can add nothing to the philosophic truth of this opinion. But all immoderately severe punishments have proceeded upon the contrary principle. The threat of capital punishment cannot be necessary to deter those placed out of the reach of temptation, to wit, the respectable and wealthy classes, from the picking of pockets. The lowest penalty, the calculation of the smallest chance of a discovery, is more than sufficient for them. It is intended, therefore, to counteract strong temptation and inclination: and here, again, it is ineffectual or worse, without the sentiment above spoken of; which sentiment cannot be created out of the punishment, but must be proportioned to the nature of the act. It is the nature of passion to be blind to mere consequences: nay, more, it is the nature of passion, when its purpose is once fixed, to justify itself, and to resist and harden itself against consequences. Intimidation, by being indiscriminately applied, acts as an incentive to defiance and

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desperation. The object of the will is to have its own way. This it will have, let the consequence be what it may; and, in order that it may have it, it is armed with an *ad libitum* reserve of fool-hardiness, insensibility, and obstinacy, to meet whatever chances and changes may be thrown in its way. This faculty, which enables them to fulfil their destiny and brave the law, is not peculiar to thieves. As Sir Richard Phillips has very well put the case in his answer on this point, 'The dread of death has no greater effect on thieves than the fatal consequences of vicious gratification, or than the usual consequences of an indulgence of vicious habits, have on mankind in general.' The sailor, the soldier, the duellist, all meet death without shrinking, in the course of their several vocations. The drunkard too knows his fate, but does not desist the more: nay, it is the sense of that, the consciousness of an obstacle in his way, that irritates his will, makes him impatient of remonstrance and restraint, and urges him on to greater excesses, and to drown all forethought in utter insensibility and disregard of the future. He gives to-morrow to the winds, with scorn and insult. The soldier's courage, in like manner, is wound up by the danger he is in; and the whizzing of bullets round his head, or the sight of dead bodies at his feet, only steels him against the fear of death. The sailor hears of storms, of battles, of shipwrecks, and feels himself the more enamoured with this precarious mode of life:—he meets with some of these disasters, and for a while has a surfeit; but goes to sea again. That is, the will, according as it has occasion for it, or is so disposed, has a power to dwell on any circumstances, and to blind itself to any contingencies it pleases.

Such is human nature; and shall we make a law against it? Thieves are addicted to their way of life from habit, or are driven to it by necessity: it becomes their profession, for want of a better, and the point of honour with them; and, though a false point of honour, it is the point of honour still. Courage, fortitude, the 'scorning to wince or whine,' the not being easily damped by disgrace or danger or death, is the first principle, the implied condition of their mode of life. This is necessary to them every moment; they could not otherwise continue in it a single day, or enjoy an hour's quiet. They are obliged to screw themselves up daily and nightly to disregard the disagreeable alternatives to which they are liable; and the greater the punishment annexed to the crime, the greater the mechanical insensibility to which they work themselves up, in order to commit it with the greater unconcern. This is what is meant by the old observation, that *severe punishments harden offenders*. It is looked upon as extraordinary that they should do so: but it would be much more extraordinary if they did not. Such persons have no thoughts of *taking up*, or means ordin-

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arily held out to them so to do, even were they inclined; and the additional penalty on their regular calling does not make them more in love with the law, but the crime. They look upon the law as their natural enemy; and its rigour makes them hate, its uncertainty (the effect of that rigour) makes them despise it the more. If they can charge it with manifest cruelty, they triumphantly appeal to the sentiments of the community in their favour; if it is executed in spite of those sentiments, they consider themselves as the victims of persecution, and go to the gallows with the resolution of martyrs in the cause of justice. If the letter of the law is not executed, it excites odium and contempt at once—*Omne tulit punctum*. It has the effect of malice defeated; and in the successful evasion of the greater punishment held out *in terrorem*, the culprit in a manner forgets, and is indifferent to the lesser one inflicted.

There is not only a determination in the human mind to set untoward consequences at defiance, but (where they appear to be inevitable) even to court them. This is what is understood by the power of *fascination*. Thieves are subject to this power, like other men, as they are to that of gravitation. Objects of terror often haunt the mind; and, by their influence in subduing the imagination, draw the will to them as a fatality. Persons in excessive and intolerable apprehension fling themselves into the very arms of what they dread, and are impelled to rush upon their fate, and put an end to their suspense and agitation. These are said to be 'the toys of desperation:' and, fantastical as they may appear, Legislators ought to pay more attention to this than they have done; for the mind, in those extreme and violent temperaments which they have to apply to, is not to be dealt with like a mere machine. Gibbets, which have now become very uncommon, may, we think, have produced equivocal effects in this way. They belong to the class of what are called interesting objects. They excite a feeling of horror, not altogether without its attraction, in the ordinary spectator, and startle while they rivet the eye. Who shall say how often, in gloomy and sullen dispositions, this equivocal appeal to the imagination may not have become an ingredient to pamper murderous thoughts, and to give a superstitious bias to the last act of the will? To see this ghastly appearance rearing its spectral form in some solitary place at nightfall, by a wood-side or barren heath,—to note the wretched scarecrow figure dangling upon it, black and wasted, parched in the sun, drenched in all the dews of Heaven that fall cool and silent on it, while this object of the dread and gaze of men feels nothing, knows nothing, fears nothing, and swings, creaking in the gale, unconscious of all that it has suffered, or that others suffer—there is something in all these circumstances that may lead the mind to tempt the same fate, and

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place itself beyond the reach of mortal consequences !—Simple hanging, on the contrary, has nothing inviting in it. It is a disagreeable contemplation in all respects. The broken slumbers that precede it—the half-waking out of them to a hideous sense of what is to come—the dull head and heartache—the feverish agony, or the more frightful deadness to all feeling—the weight of eyes that overwhelm the criminal's—the faint, useless hope of a mockery of sympathy—the hangman, like a spider, crawling near him—the short helpless struggle—the last sickly pang :—all combine to render this punishment as disgusting as it is melancholy. A man must be tired of his life, indeed, to be ever prompted by such a spectacle to go out of the world in the same way : though, it must be confessed, that it is enough to give one a contempt for humanity, and for all that belongs to it. We think it is a mode of punishment most desirable—to be avoided by every one. It is, however, calculated, if any thing can be, to tame the utmost violence and depravity of the human will, by showing what a poor mean creature a man is or can be made : but we surely are of opinion, it ought not to be inflicted for any act which does not excite the dread and detestation of the community, and cut the individual completely off from all sympathy. We do not conceive that stealing to the value of twelve-pence from the pocket, or of five shillings from a counter, does this ; and therefore we are glad that the capital part of the punishment for these offences is abolished ; since, though little else than a dead letter, it kept up a theory of wrong, and showed a mean hankering after inhumanity and injustice, which it is afraid to put in practice.

Mr. Montagu states justly, that mankind are less deterred from crime by calculation of consequences, than by involuntary sympathy with others, and by the natural sense of right and wrong. The first has little influence, except in conjunction with the two last, and it may be well that it is so : since, if all sorts of arbitrary and capricious commands were of absolute force and validity in themselves, unseconded by opinion or conscience, there would be no end of ' the fantastic tricks which man, dressed in a little brief authority, might play before high Heaven, to make the angels weep.' There has been too much of this work already ; and a very little of the same spirit in future will be more than is wanted. There is enough of it lurking in the prejudices and vindictive passions of men ; and it need not be fomented by panders and sophists. No punishment, we believe, will in the end be found to be wise or humane, or just or effectual, that is not the natural reaction of a man's own conduct on his own head, or the making him feel, in his own person, the consequences of the injury he has meditated against others. It is impossible to force this sentiment in the individual or the community up to the same degree of horror against the smallest as

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against the highest crimes by a positive law. Every such unequal enactment is in fact so much outrage and injury done to the very foundation and end of all law : but where a punishment is in conformity to this sentiment, the mind, instead of resisting and resenting, acquiesces in it as a dictate, not of caprice or will, but of equal justice between man and man ; and anticipates it, by a sure instinct of moral arithmetic, as a necessary and direct consequence of its own actions. A punishment that has not this natural as well as legal sanction, fails to bend and overawe the will : it only hardens and irritates, as was said before. It does not strike upon the mind even in the shape of terror ; for the imagination easily rejects, as incredible, that which it regards as wholly unfounded and unwarrantable. It is the link of moral and social sympathy alone which can ever bring the penalties affixed by law to any crime home to the mind of the criminal, so as to produce, 1. intimidation, 2. conviction and reform. For instance, to show how punishment operates when the sense of natural justice and necessity goes along with it, we will suppose the case of a murderer in his cell, and consider how his situation affects himself and the community. We will not say that the latter feel no pity for him (God forbid !)—but they feel it, as he almost feels it himself, not altering the stern sense of justice. In fact, he appears to the imagination less a sacrifice to the vengeance of the laws, than a ready accomplice with them—a victim self-doomed and self-condemned. His limbs are not only manacled, his life a forfeit ; but his conscience is limed, his reason is in the strong toils of the law, that has pronounced sentence upon him. He is delivered up, bound hand and foot, body and mind—is his own judge and executioner. He seems to be tainted all over—a mass of corruption wasting away with loathing of itself—falling in pieces for want of support from the fellow-feeling of a single fellow-creature. He breathes thick and short the stifling close-pent air of guilt ; and waits for the parting of soul and body as a timely release from his own reflections, and the general enmity of the community. Not so the terrified victim of an arbitrary law, a woman perhaps condemned for uttering forged Bank of England notes, dragged, torn to the place of execution ‘ with shrieks like mandrakes,’ whose fate excites equal agony in her own mind, and dread in the public ; who hear indeed a great outcry about the alarming increase of contempt for the laws, but whose only real object of terror and disgust is the execution of them. This is a state of the law which ought not to continue a moment longer than it can possibly be helped. That we are bold to say. There should be a marked and acknowledged difference in the punishment of crimes, or there must be a loss of all sense of moral distinction, or of all respect for the laws that systematically hold it in complete scorn.

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So far it should seem, then, that the Committee have been right in recommending the abolition of capital punishment in the cases in which they have done so, if in no others. It remains to consider what other punishments are fit to be substituted for it, and what other securities may be found for the community. On this question the evidence of Mr. Harmer, on which the Committee lay considerable stress, is of great weight and importance.

‘I mention,’ he says, ‘these circumstances, to show what little fear common thieves entertain of capital punishment; and that, so far from being arrested in their wicked courses by the distant possibility of its infliction, they are not even intimidated at its certainty; and the present numerous enactments to take away life, appear to me wholly inefficacious. But there are punishments which I am convinced a thief would dread, and which, if steadily pursued, might have the most salutary effect; namely, a course of discipline totally reversing his former habits. IDLENESS is one of the prominent characteristics of a professed thief—put him to labour :—DEBAUCHERY is another quality, abstinence is its opposite, apply it :—DISSIPATED COMPANY is a thing they indulge in; they ought, therefore, to experience solitude :—they are accustomed to UNCONTROLLED LIBERTY OF ACTION; I would consequently impose restraint and decorum; and were these suggestions put in practice, I have no doubt we should find a considerable reduction in the number of offenders: I say this, because I have very often heard thieves express their great dislike and dread of being sent to the House of Correction, or to the Hulks, where they would be obliged to labour, and kept under restraint; but I never heard one say he was afraid of being hanged. Formerly, before Newgate was under the regulations that it now is, I could always tell an old thief from the person that had for the first time committed crime: the novice would shudder at the idea of being sent to Newgate; but the old thief would request that he might be committed at once to that prison by the magistrate, because he could there associate with his companions, and have his girl to sleep with him, which, some years back, used to be allowed or winked at by the upper turnkeys: but, since the late regulations, certainly I have not heard of such applications being made by thieves, because now they are as much restrained and kept in order in Newgate as in other prisons. From my observation, I am quite certain that a thief cannot bear the idea of being kept under subordination. As to transportation, I with deference think it ought not to be adopted, except for incorrigible offenders, and then it ought to be for life; if it is for seven years, the novelty of the thing, and the prospect of returning to their friends and associates, reconciles offenders to it, so that in fact they consider it no punishment; and when this sentence



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is passed on men, they frequently say, "Thank you, my Lord." Indeed this is a common expression, used every Session by prisoners, when sentenced to seven years' transportation.' P. 109.

Such is the deliberate opinion, gleaned from twenty years' thought and experience, of one who has been concerned during that period in constant trials at the Old Bailey, and who is equally distinguished by assiduity, acuteness and humanity, in his profession. It is amusing, however, to see how it has been treated by the enemies of all improvement. If a speculative philosopher, unused to the ways of the world, gives an opinion on what he thinks best, it is set down as romantic extravagance, or pitiable simplicity, that will not bear the test of experience. If a person conversant (to a painful degree of intimacy) with vice and infamy comes to the same general conclusion, a delicate prudery is assumed on the occasion, and a sensibility to the nice gradations of vice and virtue is arrogated for those whose purity of imagination has not been contaminated by the contact of actual depravity; and we are referred to the respectable classes of the community for the most authentic information as to the motives, feelings, and mode of operating on the minds of rogues and vagabonds, these last being supposed (from habitual obduracy) utterly ignorant of what passes in their own minds, and of the only things that do or can affect them!

In proposing to put a stop to the alarming increase of crime, by the continual threat, or the more frequent infliction of capital punishment, we do not find any attempt made to suppress, by such extreme severity, any other offences but offences against *Property*. We hear the number of common prostitutes spoken of as an enormous evil, and as tending to increase the number of thieves and pickpockets: and *Seduction*, which leads to this deplorable consequence, is itself a great evil; yet we hear of no attempt to punish seduction with death, which yet does a great deal more harm, one year with another, than the mischievous propensity for cutting down young trees, or rooting up whole plantations. The reason is, seduction is practised by the rich, as well as others. *Drunkenness* is a beastly vice, and does all the mischief in the world to the health and to the morals: but it is common to all classes of the English nation; and no one, therefore, thinks of putting down this alarming and extensive evil, by making it capital to take a drop too much. Yet, would it not lessen the crime, if a man inclined to commit it were to be told—'If you get drunk to-night, you will be hanged, or with a headache to-morrow;' instead of being only told—'You cannot be hanged, but you will probably have the headache to-morrow?' *Gambling* is another very prevalent vice, and does incalculable mischief; but it is not confined to the lower orders; and therefore no one proposes a sweeping clause to make it capital without benefit of clergy.

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Thieves, on the contrary, are never persons of distinction or independent fortunes. It is a most ungentlemanlike vice, uniformly committed by the lower against the upper classes; and therefore there is so little hesitation in making it a capital felony, and so much difficulty and fuss about taking away the capital part of the penalty in the most common and trivial instances of it. Yet, in spite of this alarming and unheard-of increase of crime (the crime of privately stealing from the pocket, the dwelling-house, or counter), which one would suppose had, like an Egyptian plague, infested every corner of the land, made our streets impassable, and our homes uncomfortable, we live and do well, we sleep sound in our beds, and do not dream of shop-lifters or cut-purses. The evil complained of may have alarmingly increased; but still it is confined within petty limits. It does not burst asunder any of the great bonds of society, nor practically disturb human life: it does not give a moment's annoyance to one individual in a thousand, in the course of a year, nor an hour's serious concern even to the person who may chance to suffer by it. He reads the account of his disaster the next day in the newspaper, and is satisfied. Why? Because he knows that the practice is necessarily confined to certain classes of persons, which can never increase to an unlimited extent. It is agreed, that only the lowest of the lower classes turn common thieves; and this is construed into a proof of the greater depravity of those classes. This requires explanation.

The man of ten thousand a year confessedly does not steal: he has no possible temptation. Again, the man of a thousand a year does not. The lawyer, in the full career of his profession, does not violate the law in this respect, nor the merchant in a large way of business. They do not want the money; or they can get it in a much easier and more reputable way. But the man who has not a penny in his purse, nor any means of getting a farthing, steals to save himself from starving. Theft is not, at least in the first instance, a voluntary or a malicious crime; and therefore should be distinguished from those that are. It is not a vice of general inclination, or of inherent depravity, but of particular circumstances. Place a thief in the circumstances of a gentleman, and he will no longer be a thief—though he may carry all his other bad propensities into his new character.

Take the most common case of the first lapse into this offence, and consider with what feelings it would be just or natural to view it. What, then, is the meaning of the outcry against the lawless depravity of the lower classes in this country? A man is a labourer or a mechanic; he has a wife and children to support; he works night and day; he denies himself almost every thing; still he finds it difficult to live. He is taken sick, or thrown out of employ; he is reduced to the utmost

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extremity ; he still holds out, and clings to the last chance of hope and honesty ; but in vain—his patience and his principle will last no longer—and he steals ! Why ? Not from want of industry ; he had the greatest—not from want of economy ; he observed the strictest—not from want of abstinence ; he almost starved himself to death—not from want of fortitude ; he bore every sort of distress and hardship without repining—not even from want of honesty ; for the first departure from it almost broke his heart. Yet he and his class are accused of a total want of decency and moral principle, from his not having an heroic degree of these virtues, not one of which the higher classes are so much as ever called upon to practise, or to make the smallest sacrifice to. To argue, therefore, against the good disposition of the lower classes generally, because they alone are subject to those temptations which produce a particular violation of the law, when the truth is, that by far the greater part of them are continually holding out to the last extremity of despair, of sickness, and often of life itself, in struggling against those temptations, is most base and unmanly.

The increased distress of the lower classes will accordingly account, if not for the whole mass of petty depredation, for the present alarming increase of this crime. Suppose an unusual tendency to idleness and extravagance to operate in producing this result in some characters sooner than in others, yet it would not produce it even in those characters without the great hardships and privations they have to undergo. A lawyer who sells ‘golden opinions to all sorts of people,’—in whose chambers ‘it snows of bank-notes,’—feels no temptation to be idle : he has his stimulus to the virtue of industry, always at hand, and always powerful. He rises early—(so will any man who has any thing to do)—and will not sit up more than three nights running for any attorney in London. Good : he has his reasons, and they are sufficient. But do they affect the law-stationer (we mean his man), who works at the most wretched drudgery, almost for nothing, and has not work to do half his time ? Or, because *he* grows tired of that which has no inducement to recommend it, and in the intervals of hopeless leisure, sots away his time at the alehouse, and, to pay his score, commits a larceny, after twenty or thirty years’ hard, thankless, unprofitable labour,—is it because he is a more idle, or a less fortunate man than his employer ?

We need not pursue this reasoning farther. The proof is self-evident in favour of the industrious, self-denying, moral habits of the common people of England ; for they are the only people who ever feel the temptation to violate their obligations to honesty, and they do not do it once in a thousand extreme cases. If, however, they do it once, it is all over with them : and infamy, grinning at their backs,

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blocks out their return to the path of honesty ever after. They are thus driven upon desperate courses, both from want and shame; and become *confirmed* thieves. Those whose parents have been so before them, and have brought them up without any other means of a livelihood, or notions of morality, are *hereditary* thieves; and this is the third and last stage. The first are so from accidental causes: the second from habit: the third from education. What is to be the cure of these severally? The answer to all three at once, like Swift's Short Way with the Dissenters, is on the present or late system—hanging; or else, 1. treating the first accidental offence as an incorrigible disease; 2. curing bad habits and inclinations by an unreserved indulgence of them in prison; 3. ingrafting upon the vices of education the contagion of the worst examples, in prison and out of it.

We think it better to try, at least, the new, and, as it is called, improved system, 1. of giving those who have been led away, by temporary necessity, a probation in Penitentiary Houses; 2. of correcting (if it be possible) bad habits, by substituting opposite ones in a course of prison-discipline; and, 3. of preventing the evils of ignorance, and want of proper education, by a better education. Or, lastly, where these are found insufficient at home, the Transportation system, by flinging the victims of vice, of shame, of ignorance and necessity, entirely out of themselves, their old ideas and habits, and giving them a new country, and almost a new being, may be tried with effect. At any rate, all these methods afford security to society, and a chance of reform and repentance to the individual.

Conciliation is, in most cases, the dictate of justice no less than of policy. You cannot produce conviction by unjust measures: you will seldom intimidate by violent ones: but you may wean from crimes, by lessening the temptation to commit them, and by making the vices punish themselves, in the privation of the very indulgences they aim at securing. Consideration for others is the first step to awaken reflection in them. Compassion begets confidence, and confidence a willingness to hearken to reason: whereas irritation and severity can only preclude all sympathy, and increase the hardened insensibility which is now viewed as excluding all hopes from a milder and more effectual treatment.

But (we hear those crying out who always turn good into evil and light to darkness) consider the expense of your improved system. Calculate the cost of your penitentiaries, your gaols (no longer like the dens of wild beasts, or styes for swine to be huddled together), your distant colonies; consider well what it will take you to keep all those whom you do not hang, or put into a way of being soon hanged. Oh! let not our economy begin by taxing our humanity: let us not

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lavish millions in wanton waste and wide-spread mischief, and grudge a few thousands of the public money for the public service ! Let us not vote endless sums for everlasting worthless jobs, and buildings planned for havoc and destruction, and then ' turn askance with jealous leer malign ' from the first building that greets our eyes, raised for the salvation of men, as from the rock on which the hopes of future generations must split, and as if it were a mill-stone tied, like another national debt, round the neck of the country. But again (and waving this objection) it is asked, If you improve the system of coercion so as to answer the ends of reform to some, how will it answer those of intimidation to others ? Never mind :—if it does not intimidate others, then reform *them* too. But this is a needless alarm. No system of coercion can have charms for the unspotted and the free, so as to induce them to plunge into Penitentiaries of the most elegant description, or cross pathless oceans, to emerge on pathless wildernesses ; and as to offenders themselves, depend upon it, that there is nothing that inspires such dread into all this class of persons (from the highest to the lowest) as the idea of subjecting them to any ordeal that is likely to end in Reform.

But the true and decisive answer is, that the new system *has succeeded* as far as it has been tried, both here and in other countries ; and the only evil likely to result from its farther extension seems to be, that it may deprive police-officers of the reward for the conviction of offenders, and the keepers of night-houses of the profits derived from harbouring them in the mean time. As to Mr. Harmer's suggestion, that transportation should be reserved for incorrigible offenders, we do not immediately enter into it. If applied early and judiciously, it might operate to prevent the growth of incorrigibly bad habits ; and, by breaking off at once all connexion with former associates and pursuits, plant a new race of men in a new soil, or ingraft them on a prior settlement, with other and better prospects. Mrs. Fry, we believe, has already done much good by her attempts to reform different sorts of prisoners : and it is to be remembered that she belongs to a sect, whose practice, as well as creed, is benevolence. The Quakers have taken a considerable interest in this question ; and to them we also, in a great measure, owe the Abolition of the Slave-Trade. They have been ridiculed, as a body, for not lending themselves to the pomps and vanities of the world ; but they devote themselves to prying into, and alleviating its evils. If you see one of them come into a bookseller's shop, it is not to inquire for Campbell's Pleasures of Hope, or for Rogers's Pleasures of Memory, but for Buxton on Prison Discipline, or for the Last Account of the State of the Gaol at Leicester. These are *their* delights, their luxuries, and refinements. They do not

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indeed add new grace to the 'Corinthian capitals of polished society,' but they dig down into its dungeon-glooms and noisome sewers,

'Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.'

They bear the yoke of the wretched, and lighten the burden of humanity—and they have, and will have their reward.

## ON THE SPIRIT OF MONARCHY

*The Liberal.*

January 1823.

'Strip it of its externals, and what is it but a jest?'

*Charade on the word MAJESTY.*

'As for politics, I think poets are *Tories* by nature, supposing them to be by nature poets. The love of an individual person or family, that has worn a crown for many successions, is an inclination greatly adapted to the fanciful tribe. On the other hand, mathematicians, abstract reasoners, of no manner of attachment to persons, at least to the visible part of them, but prodigiously devoted to the ideas of virtue, liberty, and so forth, are generally *Whigs*. It happens agreeably enough to this maxim, that the Whigs are friends to that wise, plodding, unpoetical people, the Dutch.'—*Sbenstone's Letters*, 1746.

THE Spirit of Monarchy then is nothing but the craving in the human mind after the Sensible and the One. It is not so much a matter of state-necessity or policy, as a natural infirmity, a disease, a false appetite in the popular feeling, which must be gratified. Man is an individual animal with narrow faculties, but infinite desires, which he is anxious to concentrate in some one object within the grasp of his imagination, and where, if he cannot be all that he wishes himself, he may at least contemplate his own pride, vanity, and passions, displayed in their most extravagant dimensions in a being no bigger and no better than himself. Each individual would (were it in his power) be a king, a God: but as he cannot, the next best thing is to see this reflex image of his self-love, the darling passion of his breast, realized, embodied out of himself in the first object he can lay his hands on for the purpose. The slave admires the tyrant, because the last *is*, what the first *would be*. He surveys himself all over in the glass of royalty. The swelling, bloated self-importance of the one is the very counter-part and ultimate goal of the abject servility of the other. But both hate mankind for the same reason, because a respect for humanity is a diversion to their inordinate self-love, and the idea of the general good is a check to the gross intemperance of passion. The worthlessness of the object does not diminish but irritate the propensity to admire. It serves to pamper our imagination equally, and does not provoke our envy. All we want is to aggrandize our

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own vain-glory at second hand ; and the less of real superiority or excellence there is in the person we fix upon as our proxy in this dramatic exhibition, the more easily can we change places with him, and fancy ourselves as good as he. Nay, the descent favours the rise ; and we heap our tribute of applause the higher, in proportion as it is a free gift. An idol is not the worse for being of coarse materials : a king should be a common-place man. Otherwise, he is superior in his own nature, and not dependent on our bounty or caprice. Man is a poetical animal, and delights in fiction. We like to have scope for the exercise of our mere will. We make kings of men, and Gods of stocks and stones : we are not jealous of the creatures of our own hands. We only want a peg or loop to hang our idle fancies on, a puppet to dress up, a lay-figure to paint from. It is 'THING Ferdinand, and not KING Ferdinand,' as it was wisely and wittily observed. We ask only for the stage effect ; we do not go behind the scenes, or it would go hard with many of our prejudices ! We see the symbols of majesty, we enjoy the pomp, we crouch before the power, we walk in the procession, and make part of the pageant, and we say in our secret hearts, there is nothing but accident that prevents us from being at the head of it. 'There is something in the mock-sublimity of thrones, wonderfully congenial to the human mind. Every man feels that he could sit there ; every man feels that he could look big there ; every man feels that he could bow there ; every man feels that he could play the monarch there. 'The transition is so easy, and so delightful ! 'The imagination keeps pace with royal state,

' And by the vision splendid  
Is on its way attended.'

The Madman in Hogarth who fancies himself a king, is not a solitary instance of this species of hallucination. Almost every true and loyal subject holds such a barren sceptre in his hand ; and the meanest of the rabble, as he runs by the monarch's side, has wit enough to think —'There goes my *royal* self !' From the most absolute despot to the lowest slave there is but one step (no, not one) in point of real merit. As far as truth or reason is concerned, they might change situations to-morrow—nay, they constantly do so without the smallest loss or benefit to mankind ! Tyranny, in a word, is a farce got up for the entertainment of poor human nature ; and it might pass very well, if it did not so often turn into a tragedy.

We once heard a celebrated and elegant historian and a hearty Whig declare, he liked a king like George III. better than such a one as Buonaparte ; because, in the former case, there was nothing to

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overawe the imagination but birth and situation ; whereas he could not so easily brook the double superiority of the other, mental as well as adventitious. So does the spirit of independence and the levelling pride of intellect join in with the servile rage of the vulgar ! This is the advantage which an hereditary has over an elective monarchy : for there is no end of the dispute about precedence while merit is supposed to determine it, each man laying claim to this in his own person ; so that there is no other way to set aside all controversy and heart-burnings, but by precluding moral and intellectual qualifications altogether, and referring the choice to accident, and giving the preference to a nonentity. ‘A good king,’ says Swift, ‘should be, in all other respects, a mere cypher.’

It has been remarked, as a peculiarity in modern criticism, that the courtly and loyal make a point of crying up Mr. Young, as an actor, and equally running down Mr. Kean ; and it has been conjectured in consequence that Mr. Kean was a *radical*. Truly, he is not a radical politician ; but what is as bad, he is a radical actor. He savours too much of the reality. He is not a mock-tragedian, an automaton player—he is something besides his paraphernalia. He has ‘that within which passes shew.’ There is not a particle of affinity between him and the patrons of the court-writers. Mr. Young, on the contrary, is the very thing—all assumption and strut and measured pomp, full of self-importance, void of truth and nature, the mask of the characters he takes, a pasteboard figure, a stiff piece of wax-work. He fills the throne of tragedy, not like an upstart or usurper, but as a matter of course, decked out in his plumes of feathers, and robes of state, stuck into a posture, and repeating certain words by rote. Mr. Kean has a heart in his bosom, beating with human passion (a thing for the great ‘to fear, not to delight in !’), he is a living man, and not an artificial one. How should those, who look to the surface, and never probe deeper, endure him ? He is the antithesis of a court-actor. It is the object there to suppress and varnish over the feelings, not to give way to them. His *overt* manner must shock them, and be thought a breach of all decorum. They are in dread of his fiery humours, of coming near his Voltaic Battery—they chuse rather to be roused gently from their self-complacent apathy by the application of Metallic Tractors. They dare not trust their delicate nerves within the estuary of the passions, but would slumber out their torpid existence in a calm, a Dead Sea—the air of which extinguishes life and motion !

Would it not be hard upon a little girl, who is busy in dressing up a favourite doll, to pull it in pieces before her face in order to shew her the bits of wood, the wool, and rags it is composed of ? So it



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would be hard upon that great baby, the world, to take any of its idols to pieces, and shew that they are nothing but painted wood. Neither of them would thank you, but would consider the offer as an insult. The little girl knows as well as you do that her doll is a cheat ; but she shuts her eyes to it, for she finds her account in keeping up the deception. Her doll is her pretty little self. In its glazed eyes, its cherry cheeks, its flaxen locks, its finery and its baby-house, she has a fairy vision of her own future charms, her future triumphs, a thousand hearts led captive, and an establishment for life. Harmless illusion ! that can create something out of nothing, can make that which is good for nothing in itself so fine in appearance, and clothe a shapeless piece of deal-board with the attributes of a divinity ! But the great world has been doing little else but playing at *make-believe* all its life-time. For several thousand years its chief rage was to paint larger pieces of wood and smear them with gore and call them Gods and offer victims to them—slaughtered hecatombs, the fat of goats and oxen, or human sacrifices—shewing in this its love of shew, of cruelty, and imposture ; and woe to him who should ‘ peep through the blanket of the dark to cry, *Hold, hold.*’—*Great is Diana of the Ephesians*, was the answer in all ages. It was in vain to represent to them, ‘ Your Gods have eyes but they see not, ears but they hear not, neither do they understand ’—the more stupid, brutish, helpless, and contemptible they were, the more furious, bigotted, and implacable were their votaries in their behalf.<sup>1</sup> The more absurd the fiction, the louder was the noise made to hide it—the more mischievous its tendency, the more did it excite all the phrenzy of the passions. Superstition nursed, with peculiar zeal, her ricketty, deformed, and preposterous offspring. She passed by the nobler races of animals even, to pay divine honours to the odious and unclean—she took toads and serpents, cats, rats, dogs, crocodiles, goats and monkeys, and hugged them to her bosom, and dandled them into deities, and set up altars to them, and drenched the earth with tears and blood in their defence ; and those who did not believe in them were cursed, and were forbidden the use of bread, of fire, and water, and to worship them was piety, and their images were held sacred, and their race became Gods in perpetuity and by divine right. To touch them, was sacrilege : to kill them, death, even in your own defence. If they stung you, you must die : if they infested the land with their numbers and their pollutions, there was no remedy. The

<sup>1</sup> ‘ Of whatsoe’er descent his Godhead be,  
Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,  
In his defence his servants are as bold  
As if he had been made of beaten gold.’—DRYDEN.

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nuisance was intolerable, impassive, immortal. Fear, religious horror, disgust, hatred, heightened the flame of bigotry and intolerance. There was nothing so odious or contemptible but it found a sanctuary in the more odious and contemptible perversity of human nature. The barbarous Gods of antiquity reigned *in contempt of their worshippers*!

This game was carried on through all the first ages of the world, and is still kept up in many parts of it; and it is impossible to describe the wars, massacres, horrors, miseries and crimes, to which it gave colour, sanctity, and sway. The idea of a God, beneficent and just, the invisible maker of all things, was abhorrent to their gross, material notions. No, they must have Gods of their own making, that they could see and handle, that they knew to be nothing in themselves but senseless images, and these they daubed over with the gaudy emblems of their own pride and passions, and these they lauded to the skies, and grew fierce, obscene, frantic before them, as the representatives of their sordid ignorance and barbaric vices. TRUTH, GOOD, were idle names to them, without a meaning. They must have a lie, a palpable, pernicious lie, to pamper their crude, unhallowed conceptions with, and to exercise the untamable fierceness of their wills. The Jews were the only people of antiquity who were withheld from running headlong into this abomination; yet so strong was the propensity in them (from inherent frailty as well as neighbouring example) that it could only be curbed and kept back by the hands of Omnipotence.<sup>1</sup> At length, reason prevailed over imagination so far, that these brute idols and their altars were overturned; it was thought too much to set up stocks and stones, Golden Calves and Brazen Serpents, as *bona-fide* Gods and Goddesses, which men were to fall down and worship at their peril—and Pope long after summed up the merits of the whole mythologic tribe in a handsome distich—

‘ Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust.’

It was thought a bold stride to divert the course of our imaginations, the overflowings of our enthusiasm, our love of the mighty and the marvellous, from the dead to the living *subject*, and there we stick. We have got living idols, instead of dead ones; and we fancy that they are real, and put faith in them accordingly. Oh, Reason! when will thy long minority expire? It is not now the fashion to make

<sup>1</sup> They *would* have a king in spite of the devil. The image-worship of the Papists is a batch of the same leaven. The apishness of man's nature would not let even the Christian Religion escape.

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Gods of wood and stone and brass, but we make kings of common men, and are proud of our own handy-work. We take a child from his birth, and we agree, when he grows up to be a man, to heap the highest honours of the state upon him, and to pay the most devoted homage to his will. Is there any thing in the person, 'any mark, any likelihood,' to warrant this sovereign awe and dread? No: he may be little better than an idiot, little short of a madman, and yet he is no less qualified for king.<sup>1</sup> If he can contrive to pass the College of Physicians, the Herald's College dub him divine. Can we make any given individual taller or stronger or wiser than other men, or different in any respect from what nature intended him to be? No; but we can make a king of him. We cannot add a cubit to the stature, or instil a virtue into the minds of monarchs—but we can put a sceptre into their hands, a crown upon their heads, we can set them on an eminence, we can surround them with circumstance, we can aggrandise them with power, we can pamper their appetites, we can pander to their wills. We can do every thing to exalt them in external rank and station—nothing to lift them one step higher in the scale of moral or intellectual excellence. Education does not give capacity or temper; and the education of kings is not especially directed to useful knowledge or liberal sentiment. What then is the state of the case? The highest respect of the community and of every individual in it is paid and is due of right there, where perhaps not an idea can take root, or a single virtue be engrafted. Is not this to erect a standard of esteem directly opposite to that of mind and morals? The lawful monarch may be the best or the worst man in his dominions, he may be the wisest or the weakest, the wittiest or the stupidest: still he is equally entitled to our homage as king, for it is the place and power we bow to, and not the man. He may

<sup>1</sup> 'In fact, the argument drawn from the supposed incapacity of the people against a representative Government, comes with the worst grace in the world from the patrons and admirers of hereditary government. Surely, if government were a thing requiring the utmost stretch of genius, wisdom, and virtue to carry it on, the office of King would never even have been dreamt of as hereditary, any more than that of poet, painter, or philosopher. It is easy here 'for the Son to tread in the Sire's steady steps.' It requires nothing but the will to do it. Extraordinary talents are not once looked for. Nay, a person, who would never have risen by natural abilities to the situation of churchwarden or parish beadle, succeeds by unquestionable right to the possession of a throne, and wields the energies of an empire, or decides the fate of the world with the smallest possible share of human understanding. The line of distinction which separates the regal purple from the slabbering-bib is sometimes fine indeed; as we see in the case of the two Ferdinands. Any one above the rank of an idiot is supposed capable of exercising the highest functions of royal state. Yet these are the persons who talk of the people as a swinish multitude, and taunt them with their want of refinement and philosophy.'—*Yellow Dwarf*, p. 84.

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be a sublimation of all the vices and diseases of the human heart ; yet we are not to say so, we dare not even think so. ‘ Fear God, and honour the King,’ is equally a maxim at all times and seasons. The personal character of the king has nothing to do with the question. Thus the extrinsic is set up over the intrinsic by authority : wealth and interest lend their countenance to gilded vice and infamy on principle, and outward shew and advantages become the symbols and the standard of respect in despite of useful qualities or well-directed efforts through all ranks and gradations of society. ‘ From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness left.’ The whole style of moral thinking, feeling, acting, is in a false tone—is hollow, spurious, meretricious. Virtue, says Montesquieu, is the principle of republics ; honour, of a monarchy. But it is ‘ honour dishonourable, sin-bred ’—it is the honour of trucking a principle for a place, of exchanging our honest convictions for a ribbon or a garter. The business of life is a scramble for unmerited precedence. Is not the highest respect entailed, the highest station filled without any possible proofs or pretensions to public spirit or public principle ? Shall not the next places to it be secured by the sacrifice of them ? It is the order of the day, the understood etiquette of courts and kingdoms. For the servants of the crown to presume on merit, when the crown itself is held as an heir-loom by prescription, is a kind of *lèse majesté*, an indirect attainder of the title to the succession. Are not all eyes turned to the sun of court-favour ? Who would not then reflect its smile by the performance of any acts which can avail in the eye of the great, and by the surrender of any virtue, which attracts neither notice nor applause ? The stream of corruption begins at the fountain-head of court influence. The sympathy of mankind is that on which all strong feeling and opinion floats ; and this sets in full in every absolute monarchy to the side of tinsel shew and iron-handed power, in contempt and defiance of right and wrong. The right and the wrong are of little consequence, compared to the *in* and the *out*. The distinction between Whig and Tory is merely nominal : neither have their country one bit at heart. Phaw ! we had forgot—Our British monarchy is a mixed, and the only perfect form of government ; and therefore what is here said cannot properly apply to it. But MIGHT BEFORE RIGHT is the motto blazoned on the front of unimpaired and undivided Sovereignty !—

A court is the centre of fashion ; and no less so, for being the sink of luxury and vice—

—‘ Of outward shew  
Elaborate, of inward less exact.’

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The goods of fortune, the baits of power, the indulgences of vanity, may be accumulated without end, and the taste for them increases as it is gratified : the love of virtue, the pursuit of truth, grow stale and dull in the dissipation of a court. Virtue is thought crabbed and morose, knowledge pedantic, while every sense is pampered, and every folly tolerated. Every thing tends naturally to personal aggrandisement and unrestrained self-will. It is easier for monarchs as well as other men 'to tread the primrose path of dalliance' than 'to scale the steep and thorny road to heaven.' The vices, when they have leave from power and authority, go greater lengths than the virtues; example justifies almost every excess, and 'nice customs curtsy to great kings.' What chance is there that monarchs should not yield to the temptations of gallantry there, where youth and beauty are as wax? What female heart can indeed withstand the attractions of a throne—the smile that melts all hearts, the air that awes rebellion, the frown that kings dread, the hand that scatters fairy wealth, that bestows titles, places, honour, power, the breast on which the star glitters, the head circled with a diadem, whose dress dazzles with its richness and its taste, who has nations at his command, senates at his controul, 'in form and motion so express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a God; the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!' The power of resistance is so much the less, where fashion extends impunity to the frail offender, and screens the loss of character.

'Vice is undone, if she forgets her birth,  
And stoops from angels to the dregs of earth;  
But 'tis the fall degrades her to a whore:  
Let greatness own her, and she's mean no more.  
Her birth, her beauty, crowds and courts confess,  
Chaste matrons praise her, and grave bishops bless.  
In golden chains the willing world she draws,  
And hers the Gospel is, and hers the laws.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A lady of quality abroad, in allusion to the gallantries of the reigning Prince, being told, 'I suppose it will be your turn next?' said, 'No, I hope not; for you know it is impossible to refuse!' What a satire on the court and fashionables! If this be true, female virtue in the blaze of royalty is no more than the moth in the candle, or ice in the sun's ray. What will the great themselves say to it, in whom at this rate,

——— 'the same luck holds,  
'They all are subjects, courtiers, and cuckolds!'

Out upon it! We'll not believe it. Alas! poor virtue, what is to become of the very idea of it, if we are to be told that every man within the precincts of a palace is an *hypothetical* cuckold, or holds his wife's virtue in trust for the Prince? We entertain no doubt that many ladies of quality have resisted the importunities of a throne, and that many more would do so in private life, if they had the desired

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The air of a court is not assuredly that which is most favourable to the practice of self-denial and strict morality. We increase the temptations of wealth, of power, and pleasure a thousand-fold, while we can give no additional force to the antagonist principles of reason, disinterested integrity and goodness of heart. Is it to be wondered at that courts and palaces have produced so many monsters of avarice, cruelty, and lust? The adept in voluptuousness is not likely to be a proportionable proficient in humanity. To feed on plate or be clothed in purple, is not to feel for the hungry and the naked. He who has the greatest power put into his hands, will only become more impatient of any restraint in the use of it. To have the welfare and the lives of millions placed at our disposal, is a sort of warrant, a challenge to squander them without mercy. An arbitrary monarch set over the heads of his fellows does not identify himself with them, or learn to comprehend their rights or sympathise with their interests, but looks down upon them as of a different species from himself, as insects crawling on the face of the earth, that he may trample on at his pleasure, or if he spares them, it is an act of royal grace—he is besotted with power, blinded with prerogative, an alien to his nature, a traitor to his trust, and instead of being the organ of public feeling and public opinion, is an excrescence and an anomaly in the state, a bloated mass of morbid humours and proud flesh! A constitutional king, on the other hand, is a servant of the public, a representative of the people's wants and wishes, dispensing justice and mercy according to law. Such a monarch is the King of England! Such was his late, and such is his present Majesty George the 14th!—

Let us take the Spirit of Monarchy in its highest state of exaltation, in the moment of its proudest triumph—a Coronation-day. We now see it in our mind's eye; the preparation of weeks—the expectation of months—the seats, the privileged places, are occupied in the obscurity of night, and in silence—the day dawns slowly, big with the hope of Cæsar and of Rome—the golden censers are set in order, the tables groan with splendour and with luxury—within the inner space the rows of peeresses are set, and revealed to the eye decked out in ostrich feathers and pearls, like beds of lilies sparkling with a thousand dew-drops—the marshals and the heralds are in motion—the full organ, majestic, peals forth the Coronation Anthem—every

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opportunity: nay, we have been assured by several that a king would no more be able to prevail with them than any other man! If however there is any foundation for the above insinuation, it throws no small light on the Spirit of Monarchy, which by the supposition implies in it the *virtual* surrender of the whole sex at discretion; and at the same time accounts perhaps for the indifference shown by some monarchs in availing themselves of so mechanical a privilege.

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thing is ready—and all at once the Majesty of kingdoms bursts upon the astonished sight—his person is swelled out with all the gorgeousness of dress, and swathed in bales of silk and golden tissues—the bow with which he greets the assembled multitude, and the representatives of foreign kings, is the climax of conscious dignity, bending gracefully on its own bosom, and instantly thrown back into the sightless air, as if asking no recognition in return—the oath of mutual fealty between him and his people is taken—the fairest flowers of female beauty precede the Sovereign, scattering roses; the sons of princes page his heels, holding up the robes of crimson and ermine—he staggers and reels under the weight of royal pomp, and of a nation's eyes; and thus the pageant is launched into the open day, dazzling the sun, whose beams seem beaten back by the sun of royalty—there were the warrior, the statesman, and the mitred head—there was Prince Leopold, like a panther in its dark glossy pride, and Castle-reagh, clad in triumphant smiles and snowy satin, unstained with his own blood—the loud trumpet brays, the cannon roars, the spires are mad with music, the stones in the street are startled at the presence of a king:—the crowd press on, the metropolis heaves like a sea in restless motion, the air is thick with loyalty's quick pants in its monarch's arms—all eyes drink up the sight, all tongues reverberate the sound—

' A present deity they shout around,  
A present deity the vaulted roofs rebound ! '

What does it all amount to? A shew—a theatrical spectacle! What does it prove? That a king is crowned, that a king is dead! What is the moral to be drawn from it, that is likely to sink into the heart of a nation? That greatness consists in finery, and that supreme merit is the dower of birth and fortune! It is a form, a ceremony to which each successor to the throne is entitled in his turn as a matter of right. Does it depend on the inheritance of virtue, on the acquisition of knowledge in the new monarch, whether he shall be thus exalted in the eyes of the people? No;—to say so is not only an offence in manners, but a violation of the laws. The king reigns in contempt of any such pragmatistical distinctions. They are set aside, proscribed, treasonable, as it relates to the august person of the monarch; what is likely to become of them in the minds of the people? A Coronation overlays and drowns all such considerations for a generation to come, and so far it serves its purposes well. It debauches the understandings of the people, and makes them the slaves of sense and show. It laughs to scorn and tramples upon every other claim to distinction or respect. Is the chief person in the pageant a tyrant? It does not lessen, but aggrandise him to the

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imagination. Is he the king of a free people? We make up in love and loyalty what we want in fear. Is he young? He borrows understanding and experience from the learning and tried wisdom of councils and parliaments. Is he old? He leans upon the youth and beauty that attend his triumph. Is he weak? Armies support him with their myriads. Is he diseased? What is health to a staff of physicians? Does he die? The truth is out, and he is then—nothing!

There is a cant among court-sycophants of calling all those who are opposed to them, ‘the *rabble*,’ ‘*fellows*,’ ‘*miscreants*,’ &c. This shews the grossness of their ideas of all true merit, and the false standard of rank and power by which they measure every thing; like footmen, who suppose their masters must be gentlemen, and that the rest of the world are low people. Whatever is opposed to power, they think despicable; whatever suffers oppression, they think deserves it. They are ever ready to side with the strong, to insult and trample on the weak. This is with us a pitiful fashion of thinking. They are not of the mind of Pope, who was so full of the opposite conviction, that he has even written a bad couplet to express it:—

‘Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow :  
The rest is all but leather and prunella.’

Those lines in Cowper also must sound very puerile or old-fashioned to courtly ears:—

‘The only amaranthine flower on earth  
Is virtue; the only lasting treasure, truth.’

To this sentiment, however, we subscribe our hearts and hands. There is nothing truly liberal but that which postpones its own claims to those of propriety—or great, but that which looks out of itself to others. All power is but an unabated nuisance, a barbarous assumption, an aggravated injustice, that is not directed to the common good: all grandeur that has not something corresponding to it in personal merit and heroic acts, is a deliberate burlesque, and an insult on common sense and human nature. That which is true, the understanding ratifies: that which is good, the heart owns: all other claims are spurious, vitiated, mischievous, false—fit only for those who are sunk below contempt, or raised above opinion. We hold in scorn all *right-lined* pretensions but those of rectitude. If there is offence in this, we are ready to abide by it. If there is shame, we take it to ourselves: and we hope and hold that the time will come, when all other idols but those which represent pure truth and real



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good, will be looked upon with the same feelings of pity and wonder that we now look back to the images of Thor and Woden !

Really, that men born to a throne (limited or unlimited) should employ the brief span of their existence here in doing all the mischief in their power, in levying cruel wars and undermining the liberties of the world, to prove to themselves and others that their pride and passions are of more consequence than the welfare of mankind at large, would seem a little astonishing, but that the fact is so. It is not our business to preach lectures to monarchs, but if we were at all disposed to attempt the ungracious task, we should do it in the words of an author who often addressed the ear of monarchs.

‘A man may read a sermon,’ says Jeremy Taylor, ‘the best and most passionate that ever man preached, if he shall but enter into the sepulchres of kings. In the same Escorial where the Spanish princes live in greatness and power, and decree war or peace, they have wisely placed a cemetery where their ashes and their glory shall sleep till time shall be no more : and where *our* kings have been crowned, their ancestors lie interred, and they must walk over their grandsire’s head to take his crown. There is an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change from rich to naked, from ceiled roofs to arched coffins, from living like Gods to die like men. There is enough to cool the flames of lust, to abate the height of pride, to appease the itch of covetous desires, to sully and dash out the dissembling colours of a lustful, artificial, and imaginary beauty. There the warlike and the peaceful, the fortunate and the miserable, the beloved and the despised princes mingle their dust, and pay down their symbol of mortality, and tell all the world, that when we die our ashes shall be equal to kings, and our accounts shall be easier, and our pains for our crimes shall be less. To my apprehension, it is a sad record which is left by Athenæus concerning Ninus, the great Assyrian monarch, whose life and death is summed up in these words : “Ninus, the Assyrian, had an ocean of gold, and other riches more than the sand in the Caspian sea ; he never saw the stars, and perhaps he never desired it ; he never stirred up the holy fire among the Magi ; nor touched his God with the sacred rod, according to the laws ; he never offered sacrifice, nor worshipped the Deity, nor administered justice, nor spake to the people, nor numbered them ; but he was most valiant to eat and drink, and having mingled his wines, he threw the rest upon the stones. This man is dead : behold his sepulchre, and now hear where Ninus is. *Sometime I was Ninus, and drew the breath of a living man, but now am nothing but clay. I have nothing but what I did eat, and what I served to myself in lust is all my portion : the wealth with which I was blest, my enemies meeting together*

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*shall carry away, as the mad Thyades carry a raw goat. I am gone to Hell; and when I went thither, I carried neither gold nor horse, nor a silver chariot. I that wore a mitre, am now a little heap of dust!"*—Taylor's Holy Living and Dying.

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*The Liberal.*

July 1823.

THERE was an account in the newspapers the other day of a fracas in the street, in which a Lord and one or two Members of Parliament were concerned. It availed them nought to plead the privilege of Peerage, or to have made speeches in the House—they were held to bail, like the vilest of the rabble, and the circumstance was not considered one to come before the public. Ah! it is that public that is the sad thing. It is the most tremendous ring that ever was formed to see fair play between man and man; it puts people on their good behaviour immediately; and wherever it exists, there is an end of the airs and graces which individuals, high in rank, and low in understanding and morals, may chuse to give themselves. While the affair is private and can be kept in a corner, personal fear and favour are the ruling principles, *might* prevails over *right*: but bring it before the world, and truth and justice stand some chance. The public is too large a body to be bribed or browbeat. Its voice, deep and loud, quails the hearts of princes: its breath would make the feather in a lord's cap bend and cower before it, if its glance, measuring the real magnitude of such persons with their lofty, tiptoe, flaunting pretensions, had not long since taken the feathers out of their caps. A lord is now dressed (oh! degenerate world) like any other man; and a watchman will no sooner let go his grasp of his plain collar than he will that of a Commoner or any other man, who has his 'fancies and good-nights.' What a falling off is here from the time when if a 'base cullionly fellow' had dared to lay hands on a nobleman, on 'one of quality,' he would have whipped his sword out of its scabbard and run him through the body; the 'beggary, unmannered corse' would have been thrown into the Thames or the next ditch; and woe to any person that should have attempted to make a stir in the matter! 'The age of chivalry is gone, that of constables, legislators, and Grub-street writers, has succeeded, and the glory of heraldry is extinguished for ever.'

'The melancholy Jacques grieves at that.'

Poor Sir Walter! the times are changed indeed, since a Duke of Buckingham could send a couple of bullies, equipped in his livery, with

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swords and ribbons, to carry off a young lady from a Peveril of the Peak, by main force, in the face of day, and yet the bye-standers not dare to interfere, from a dread of the Duke's livery and the High Court of Star Chamber ! It is no wonder that the present Duke of Buckingham (the old title new revived) makes speeches in the Upper House to prove that legitimate monarchs have a right, whenever they please, to run their swords through the heart of a nation and *pink* the liberties of mankind, thinking if this doctrine were once fully restored, the old times of his predecessor might come again,—

‘ New manners and the pomp of elder days ! ’

It is in tracing the history of private manners that we see (more than any thing else) the progress that has been made in public opinion and political liberty, and that may be still farther made. No one individual now sets up his will as higher than the law : no noble Duke or Baron bold acts the professed bully or glories in the character of a lawless ruffian, as a part of the etiquette and privileges of high rank : no gay, gaudy minion of the court takes the wall of the passengers, sword in hand, cuts a throat, washes his white, crimson-spotted hands, and then to dinner with the king and the ladies.—*That* is over with us at present ; and while that is the case, Hampden will not have bled in the field, nor Sydney on the scaffold, in vain ! Even the monarch in this country, though he is above the law, is subject to opinion ; ‘ submits,’ as Mr. Burke has it, both from choice and necessity, ‘ to the soft collar of social esteem, and gives a domination, vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners ! ’

It is this which drives the Despots of the Continent mad, and makes their nobles and chief vassals league together, like a herd of tygers, to destroy the example of liberty which we (the people of England) have set to the rest of the world. They are afraid that if this example should spread and things go on much farther in the road they have taken, they will no longer be able to give their subjects and dependants the *knout*, to send them to the galleys or a dungeon without any warrant but their own unbridled will, and that a lord or a king will be no more above the law than any other man. Mankind, in short, till lately and except in this country, were considered as a herd of deer which the privileged classes were to use for their pleasure, or which they were to hunt down for spite or sport, as liked them best. That they should combine together with a knot of obscure philosophers and hair-brained philanthropists, to set up a plea not to be used at any man's pleasure, or hunted down like vermin for any man's sport, was an insult to be avenged with seas of blood, an attack upon the foundations of social order, and the very existence of all

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law, religion, and morality. In all the legitimate governments of Europe, there existed, and there still exist, a number of individuals who were exempted (by birth and title) from the law, who could offer every affront to religion, and commit every outrage upon morality with impunity, with insolence and loud laughter, and who pretended that in asserting this monstrous privilege of theirs to the very letter, the essence of all law, religion, and morality consisted. This was the case in France till the year 1789. The only law was the will of the rich to insult and harass the poor, the only religion a superstitious mummery, the only morality subserviency to the pleasures of the great. In the mild reign of Louis xv. only, there were fifteen thousand *lettres de cachet* issued for a number of private, nameless offences, such as the withholding a wife or daughter from the embraces of some man of rank, for having formerly received favours from a king's mistress, or writing an epigram on a Minister of State. It was on the ruins of this flagitious system (no less despicable than detestable) that the French Revolution rose; and the towers of the Bastille, as they fell, announced the proud truth in welcome thunder to the human race—to all but those who thought they were born, and who only wished to live, to exercise their sweeping, wholesale, ruthless tyranny, or to vent the workings of their petty, rankling spleen, pride, bigotry, and malice, in endless, tormenting details on their fellow-creatures.

It will, I conceive, hereafter be considered as the greatest enormity in history, the stupidest and the most barefaced insult that ever was practised on the understandings or the rights of men, that we should interfere in this quarrel between liberty and slavery, take the wrong side, and endeavour to suppress the natural consequences of that very example of freedom we had set. That we should do this, we who had 'long insulted the slavery of Europe by the loudness of our boasts of freedom,' who had laughed at the *Grand Monarque* for the last hundred and fifty years, and treated his subjects with every indignity, as belonging to an inferior species to ourselves, for submitting to his cruel and enervated sway; that the instant they took us at our word and were willing to break the chains of Popery and Slavery that we never ceased to taunt them with, we should turn against them, stand passive by 'with jealous leer malign,' witnessing the machinations of despots to extinguish the rising liberties of the world, and with the first plausible protest, the first watch-word given (the blow aimed at the head of a king confederate with the enemies of his country against its freedom) should join the warwhoop, and continue it loudest and longest, and never rest, under one hollow, dastard, loathsome pretence or other, till we had put down 'the last

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example of democratic rebellion ' (we, who are nothing but rebellion all over, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot !) and had restored the doctrine of Divine Right, that had fallen headless from its throne of Ignorance and Superstition with the First Charles, long before it was condemned to the same fate in the person of the French king ; that we should do this, and be led, urged on to the unhallowed task by a descendant of the House of Brunswick, who held his crown in contempt of the Stuarts, and grew old, blind, and crazed in the unsated, undiverted, sacred thirst of Legitimacy, is a thing that posterity will wonder at. We pretend to have interfered to put down the horrors of the French Revolution, when it was our interference (with that of others) that produced those horrors, of which we were glad as an excuse to justify our crooked policy and to screen the insidious, deadly, fatal blow aimed at liberty. No ; the ' cause was hearted ' in the breasts of those who reign, or who would reign, in contempt of the people, and with whom it rests to make peace or war. Is not the same principle at work still ? What horrors have the *Holy Alliance* to plead in vindication of their interference with Spain ? They have not a rag, a thread of all their hideous tissue of sophistry and lies to cover ' the open and apparent shame ' of this sequel and consistent comment on their former conduct. It is a naked, barefaced, undisguised attack upon the rights and liberties of the world : it is putting the thing upon its true and proper footing—the claim of Kings to hold mankind as a property in perpetuity. There are no horrors, real or pretended, to warrant this new outrage on common sense and human nature. It stands on its own proud basis of injustice—it towers and mocks the skies in all the majesty of regal wrong. ' The shame, the blood be upon their heads.' If there are no horrors ready-made to their hands, they stand upon their privilege to commit wanton outrage and unqualified aggression ; and if by these means they can provoke horrors, then the last are put first as the most plausible plea, as a handsome mask and soft lining to the hard gripe and features of Legitimacy—Religion consecrates, and Loyalty sanctions the fraud ! But, should the scheme fail in spite of every art and effort, and the wrong they have meditated be retorted on their own heads, then we shall have, as before, an appeal made to Liberty and Humanity—the motto of despots will once more be *peace on earth and good will to men*—and we too shall join in the yell of blood and the whine of humanity. We are only waiting for an excuse now—till the threats and insults and cruelties of insolent invaders call forth reprisals, and lead to some act of popular fury or national justice that shall serve as a signal to rouse the torpid spirit of trade in the city, or to inflame the loyalty of

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country gentlemen deaf for the present to all other sounds but that appalling one of RENT! We must remain neuter while a grievous wrong is acting, unless we can get something by the change, or pick a quarrel with the right. We are peaceable, politic, when a nation's liberty only is at stake, but were it a monarch's crown that hung tottering in the air, oh! how soon would a patriot senate and people start out to avenge the idle cause: a single speech from the throne would metamorphose us into martyrs of self-interest, saviours of the world, deliverers of Europe from lawless violence and unexampled wrong. But here we have no heart to stir, because the name of liberty alone (without the cant of loyalty) has lost its magic charm on the ears of Englishmen—impotent to save, powerful only to betray and destroy themselves and others!

We want a Burke to give the thing a legitimate turn at present. I am afraid the Editor of the *New Times* can hardly supply his place. They could hardly have done before, without that eloquent apostate, that brilliant sophist, to throw his pen into the scale against truth and liberty. He varnished over a bad cause with smooth words, and had power to 'make the worse appear the better reason'—the devil's boast! The madness of genius was necessary to second the madness of a court; his flaming imagination was the torch that kindled the smouldering fire in the inmost sanctuary of pride and power, and spread havoc, dismay, and desolation through the world. The light of his imagination, sportive, dazzling, beauteous as it seemed, was followed by the stroke of death. It so happens that I myself have played all my life with his forked shafts unhurt, because I had a metaphysical clue to carry off the noxious particles, and let them sink into the earth, like drops of water. But the English nation are not a nation of metaphysicians, or they would have detected, and smiled or wept over the glittering fallacies of this half-bred reasoner, but, at the same time, most accomplished rhetorician that the world ever saw. But they are perplexed by sophistry, stupified by prejudice, staggered by authority. In the way of common sense and practical inquiry, they do well enough; but start a paradox, and they know not what to make of it. They either turn from it altogether, or, if interest or fear give them motives to attend to it, are fascinated by it. They cannot analyze or separate the true from the *seeming* good. Mr. Pitt, with his deep-mouthed *common-places*, was able to follow in the same track, and fill up the cry; but he could not have given the tone to political feeling, or led on the chase with 'so musical a discord, such sweet thunder.' Burke strewed the flowers of his style over the rotten carcase of corruption, and embalmed it in immortal prose: he contrived, by the force of artful invective and misapplied epithets, to per-

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suade the people of England that Liberty was an illiberal, hollow sound ; that humanity was a barbarous modern invention, that prejudices were the test of truth ; that reason was a strumpet, and right a fiction. Every other view of the subject but his ('so well the tempter glozed') seemed to be without attraction, elegance, or refinement. Politics became poetry in his hands, his sayings passed like proverbs from mouth to mouth, and his descriptions and similes were admired and repeated by the fashionable and the fair. Liberty from thenceforward became a low thing : philosophy was a spring-nailed, velvet-pawed tyger-cat, with green eyes, watching its opportunity to dart upon its prey : humanity was a lurking assassin. The emblems of our cardinal and favourite virtues were overturned : the whole vocabulary of national watch-words was inverted or displaced. This was a change indeed in our style of thinking, more alarming than that in our calendar formerly : and this change was brought about by Mr. Burke, who softened down hard reasons in the crucible of his fancy, and who gave to his epithets the force of nick-names. Half the business was done by his description of the Queen of France. It was an appeal to all women of quality ; to all who were, or would be thought, cavaliers or men of honour ; to all who were admirers of beauty, or rank, or sex. Yet what it had to do with the question, it would be difficult to say. If a woman is handsome, it is well : but it is no reason why she should poison her husband, or betray a country. If, instead of being young, beautiful, and free of manners, Marie Antoinette had been old, ugly, and chaste, all this mischief had been prevented. The author of the *Reflections* had seen or dreamt he saw a most delightful vision sixteen years before, which had thrown his brain into a ferment ; and he was determined to throw his readers and the world into one too. It was a theme for a copy of verses, or a romance ; not for a work in which the destinies of mankind were to be weighed. Yet she was the Helen that opened another *Iliad* of woes ; and the world has paid for that accursed glance at youthful beauty with rivers of blood. If there was any one of sufficient genius now to deck out some Castilian maid, or village girl in the Army of the Faith, in all the colours of fancy, to reflect her image in a thousand ages and hearts, making a saint and a martyr of her ; turning loyalty into religion, and the rights and liberties of the Spanish nation, and of all other nations, into a mockery, a bye-word, and a bugbear, how soon would an end be put to Mr. Canning's present *bizarre* (almost afraid to know itself) situation ! How gladly he would turn round on the pivot of his forced neutrality, and put all his drooping tropes and figures on their splendid war-establishment again !

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Mr. Burke was much of a theatrical man. I do not mean that his high-wrought enthusiasm or vehemence was not natural to him; but the direction that he gave to it, was exceedingly capricious and arbitrary. It was for some time a doubtful question which way he should turn with respect to the French Revolution, whether for or against it. His pride took the alarm, that so much had been done with which he had nothing to do, and that a great empire had been overturned with his favourite engines, wit and eloquence, while he had been reforming the 'turn-spit of the king's kitchen,' in set speeches far superior to the occasion. Rousseau and the Encyclopædists had lamentably got the start of him; and he was resolved to drag them back somehow by the heels, and bring what they had effected to an untimely end,—

'Undoing all, as all had never been.'

The 'Reflections on the French Revolution' was a spiteful and dastard but too successful attempt to *put a spoke in the wheels* of knowledge and progressive civilization, and throw them back for a century and a half at least. In viewing the change, in the prospects of society, in producing which he had only a slight and indirect hand by his efforts in the cause of American freedom, he seemed to say, with Iago in the play,—

'Though that their joy be joy,  
Yet will I contrive  
To throw such changes of vexations on it;  
As it may lose some colour.'

He went beyond his own most sanguine hopes, but did not live to witness their final accomplishment, by seeing France literally 'blotted out of the map of Europe.' He died in the most brilliant part of Buonaparte's victorious and captain-like campaigns in Italy. If it could have been foreseen what an 'ugly customer' he was likely to prove, the way would have been to have bribed his vanity (a great deal stronger than his interest) over to the other side, by asking his opinion; and, indeed, he has thrown out pretty broad hints in the early stage of his hostility, and before the unexpected success of the French arms, and the whizzing arrows flung at him by his old friends and new antagonists had stung him to madness, that the great error of the National Assembly was in not having consulted able and experienced heads on this side the water, as to demolishing the old, and constructing the new edifice. If he had been employed to lay the first stone, or to assist, by an inaugural dissertation, at the



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baptism of the new French Constitution, the fabric of the Revolution would thenceforth have risen,—

‘Like an exhalation of rich distilled perfumery,’

without let or molestation from his tongue or pen. But he was overlooked. He was not called from his closet, or from his place in the House (where, it must be confessed, he was out of his place) to ‘ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm’; and therefore he tried, like some malicious hag, to urge the veering gale into a hurricane; to dash the labouring vessel of the state in pieces, and make shipwreck of the eternal jewel of man’s happiness, which it had on board—Liberty. The stores of practical and speculative knowledge which he had been for years collecting and digesting, and for which he had not use at home, were not called into play abroad. His genius had hitherto been always too mighty for the occasion; but here his utmost grasp of intellect would hardly have been sufficient to grapple with it. What an opportunity was lost! Something, therefore, was to be done, to relieve the galling sense of disappointed ambition and mortified self-consequence. Our political *Busy-body* turned *Marplot*; and maliciously, and like a felon, strangled the babe that he was not professionally called in to swaddle, and dandle, and bring to maturity. He had his revenge: but so must others have their’s on his memory.

Burke was not an honest man. There was always a *dash* of insincerity, a sinister bias in his disposition. We see, from the letters that passed between him and his two brothers, and Barry the painter, that there was constantly a balancing of self-interest and principle in his mind; a thanking of God that he was in no danger of yielding to temptation, yet as if it were a doubtful or ticklish point; and a patient, pensive expectation of place and emolument, till he could reconcile it with integrity and fidelity to his party; which might easily be construed into a querulous hankering after it, and an opinion that this temporary self-denial implied a considerable sacrifice on his part, or that he displayed no small share of virtue in not immediately turning knave. All this, if narrowly looked into, has a very suspicious appearance. Burke, with all his capricious wildness and flighty impulses, was a self-seeker and more constant in his enmities than in his friendships. He bore malice, and did not forgive to the last. His cold, sullen behaviour to Fox, who shed tears when they had a quarrel in the House, and his refusal to see him afterwards, when the latter came to visit him on his death-bed, will for ever remain a stigma on his memory. He was, however, punished for his fault. In his latter writings, he complains bitterly

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of the solitariness of his old age, and of the absence of the friends of his youth—whom he had deserted. This is natural justice, and the tribute due to apostacy. A man may carry over his own conscience to the side of his vanity or interest, but he cannot expect, at the same time, to carry over along with him all those with whom he has been connected in thought and action, and whose society he will miss, sooner or later. Mr. Burke could hardly hope to find, in his casual, awkward, unaccountable intercourse with such men as Pitt or Dundas, amends for the loss of his old friends, Fox and Sheridan, to whom he was knit not only by political ties, but by old habitudes, lengthened recollections, and a variety of common studies and pursuits. Pitt was a mere politician; Dundas, a mere worldling. What would they care about him, and his ‘winged words’? *No more of talk* about the meetings at Sir Joshua’s—the *Noctes cænæque Deûm*; about the fine portraits of that great colourist; about Johnson or Goldsmith, or Dunning or Barrè; or their early speeches; or the trying times in the beginning of the American war; or the classic taste and free-born spirit of Greece and Rome;—

‘The beautiful was banish’d, and return’d not.’

Perhaps, indeed, he would wish to forget most of these, as ungrateful topics; but when a man seeks for repose in oblivion of himself, he had better seek it, where he will soonest find it,—in the grave! Whatever the talents, or the momentary coincidence of opinion of his new allies, there would be a want of previous sympathy between them. Their notions would not amalgamate, or they would not be sure that they did. Every thing would require to be explained, to be reconciled. There would be none of the freedom of habitual intimacy. Friendships, like the clothes we wear, become the easier from custom. New friendships do not sit well on old or middle age. Affection is a science, to which it is too late to serve an apprenticeship after a certain period of life. This is the case with all patched-up, conventional intimacies; but it is worse when they are built on inveterate hostility and desertion from an opposite party, where their naturally crude taste is embittered by jealousy and rankling wounds. We think to exchange old friends and connections for new ones, and to be received with an additional welcome for the sacrifice we have made; but we gain nothing by it but the contempt of those whom we have left, and the suspicions of those whom we have joined. By betraying a cause, and turning our backs on a principle, we forfeit the esteem of the honest, and do not inspire one particle of confidence or respect in those who may profit by and pay us for our treachery.

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Deserters are never implicitly trusted. There is, besides the sentiment or general principle of the thing, a practical reason for this. Their zeal, their eagerness to distinguish themselves in their new career, makes them rash and extravagant; and not only so, but there is always a leaven of their old principles remaining behind, which breaks out in spite of themselves, and which it is difficult for their encouragers and patrons to guard against. This was remarkably the case with the late Mr. Windham. He was constantly *running a-muck* at some question or other, and committing the Ministers. His old, free-thinking, opposition habits returned upon him before he was aware of it; and he was sure to hazard some paradox, or stickle for some objectionable point, contrary to the forms of office. The cabinet had contemplated no such thing. He was accordingly kept in check, and alarmed the treasury-bench whenever he rose. He was like a dog that gives mouth before the time, or is continually running on a stray scent: he was chid and fed! The same thing is observable in the present Poet-Laureat, whose jacobinical principles have taken such deep root in him (*intus et in cute*) that they break out even in his Court poems, like 'a thick scurf' on loyalty; and he presents them unconsciously, (as an offering of 'sweet smelling gums,') at the very foot of the throne. He at present retains his place apparently on condition of holding his tongue. He writes such Odes on kings, that it is next to impossible not to travestie them into lampoons!

The remarks I have made above apply strongly to him and some of his associates of the *Lake School*. I fancy he has felt, as much as anyone, the inconvenience of drawing off from a cause, and that by so doing we leave our oldest and our best friends behind. There are those among the favourers and admirers of his youth, whom his dim eyes discover not, and who do not count his grey hairs. Not one or two, but more;—men of character and understanding, who have pledged mutual faith, and drank the cup of freedom with him, warm from the wine-press, as well as the 'dews of Castile.' He gave up a principle, and one left him;—he insulted a feeling, and another fled; he accepted a place, and received the congratulations of no one but Mr. Croker. He looks round for them in vain, with throbbing heart, (the heart of a poet can never lie still; he should take the more care what it is that agitates it!)—sees only the shadows or the carcasses of old friendships; or stretches out his hand to grasp some new patron, and finds that also cold. If our friends are sometimes accused of short memories, our enemies make it up by having long ones. We had better adhere to the first; for we must despair of making cordial converts of the last. This double desola-

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tion is cheerless, and makes a man bethink himself. We may make a shift (a shabby one) without our self-respect; but it will never do to have it followed by the loss of the respect of those whose opinion we once valued most. We may tamper with our own consciences; but we feel at a loss without the testimony of others in our favour, which is seldom paid, except to integrity of purpose and principle. Perhaps, however, Mr. Southey consoles himself for a certain void without and within, by receiving the compliments of some Undergraduate of either of our Universities, on his last article in defence of Rotten Boroughs, in the *Quarterly Review*; or of a Dignitary of the Church, on his share in the Six Acts, and for suggesting to Lord Sidmouth the propriety of punishing the second conviction for libel with banishment. We do not know how this may be: but with us, it would barb the dart.

It would not matter, if these turn-coats were not in such violent extremes. Between the two, they must be strangely perplexed in their own minds, and scarcely know what to make of themselves. They must have singular qualms come over them at times—the apparitions of former acquaintance and opinions. If they were contented to correct, to qualify their youthful extravagances, and to be taught by experience to steer a middle course, and pay some deference to the conclusions of others, it would be mighty well; but this is not their humour. They must be conspicuous, dogmatical, exclusive, intolerant, on whichever side they are: the mode may be different, the principle is the same. A man's nature does not change, though he may profess different sentiments. A Socinian may become a Calvinist, or a Whig a Tory: but a bigot is always a bigot; an egotist never becomes humble. Besides, what excuse has a man, after thirty, to change about all of a sudden to the very opposite side? If he is an uneducated man, he may indeed plead ignorance yesterday of what he has learnt today: but a man of study and reading can't pretend that a whole host of arguments has suddenly burst upon him, of which he never heard before, and that they have upset all his earlier notions: he must have known them long before, and if they made no impression on him then to modify his violent zeal (supposing them to be right now) it is a sign either of a disinclination, or of an incapacity, on his part, to give truth a fair hearing—a bad ground to build his present dogmatical and infallible tone upon! It is certain, that the common sense of the world condemns these violent changes of opinion; and if they do not prove that a man prefers his convenience to his virtue, they at least show that he prefers it to his reputation; for he loses his character by them. An apostate is a name that all men abhor, that no man ever willingly

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acknowledges; and the tergiversation which it denotes is not likely to come into much greater request, till it is no longer observed that a man seldom changes his principles except for his interest! Those who go over from the winning to the losing side, do not incur this appellation; and however we may count them fools, they can't be called knaves into the bargain.

## QUERIES ADDRESSED TO POLITICAL ECONOMISTS

*The Examiner.*

*April 9, 1826.*

1. LET me put a case. One night, at Drury-lane Theatre, when the play had been suddenly changed, the audience were exceedingly angry, and insisted upon having their money again, but were told on enquiry that this was impossible, as Mr. Sheridan had been in the mean time, and had carried away all the money that had been collected at the doors. What I want to know is, whether, if he had done this every night, the theatre could have flourished; or whether, if he only took away half (instead of the whole) it would not be greatly distressed and embarrassed? 'The skill and capital' of the theatre would remain the same, but when the benefit of these was to be reaped, the Manager dropped in, and *presto*—the money was gone. So the Government come in for their halves of the profits of labour, and yet we are told that the country is none the worse for it.

2. It is argued indeed that the Government is a part of the country, and that though the taxes go from the pockets of the people into those of the Government, yet they only shift hands; and that the country, *upon the whole*, is just as well off as ever, the amount of its skill and capital being the same. Would the same answer serve in the former case? Or would it do to say that the Manager of the Theatre, being part of the concern, though the money went out of the pockets of actors and authors into his, its affairs remained just upon the same footing as before, and might go on equally well, whether these persons were paid the whole of their demand, one half, or none?

3. Suppose, not that the Manager comes to empty the till every evening, but that there is an old mortgage of long standing upon the receipts of the theatre, to be paid off every quarter, for debts contracted and money advanced, would not this operate equally to distress the theatre, to perplex the Manager, dispirit the actors, discourage authors, prevent embellishments and improvements, and hang a dead weight upon the theatre, by which its exertions would be cramped, and a less sum be shared among the active supporters of its credit and the pensioners upon it, than would be shared by the

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former alone, if there were no such drawback from its actual and natural profits? Whether, if anyone were to offer to pay off this mortgage, he would not be hailed as a benefactor to the theatre?

4. Whether the Political Economists themselves do not allow that the Poor-Rates hang as a dead-weight on the industry and prosperity of the country? And whether their reasoning is intended only for the poor and not for the rich?

5. Whether the idea that the money which is taken out of the pockets of the poor, or of the community at large, in taxes, naturally and mechanically returns to them again, in the shape of wages for labour or the price of commodities, is not evidently a fallacious or partial view of the question? Since, if the money had remained with the tax-payers, it would equally have been laid out in the employment of labour or the purchase of commodities; but then this labour and these commodities would have been applied to the use of the public at large, instead of being applied to the exclusive benefit of the tax-receivers? In the latter case, the people are paid for their labour, but robbed of its produce or their comforts; in the former, they would receive the advantage of both.

6. If it is true, as is pretended, that the people lose nothing by the payment of heavy taxes, what do the Government gain by them, or what is the use of paying them? If those similes are true, of its being like a husband and wife playing against one another at cards, or like passing money from the left to the right-hand pocket (for that the nation can neither win nor lose upon the grand scale), why then not do like the husband and wife, who do not pay one another; or why be at the ridiculous trouble of shifting money from the left into the right-hand pocket?

7. Whether the taxes are not required to pay off the interest of a debt which the Government have contracted and sunk in an unprofitable speculation, as far as political economy is concerned? If the money lent to the Government has not been so sunk, but laid out profitably so as to add to the common stock, why do they come to the country to pay the interest for it? Whether, if the expenses and debt thus incurred had been paid off at the time, this would not be a proportionable loss to the country, or deduction from its actual resources, and the produce of useful labour? And whether, if it is saddled on us as interest, this is not in like manner (and economically speaking) a loss to the country ever after?

8. Again, if war is not an expensive and ruinous undertaking, why speak of the sacrifices and heroic disinterestedness of the country? Or if it is so lucrative a job, why do not the Government *farm* it, and set up a war-manufactory of blown-up vessels, burnt towns,

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spent gunpowder and spiked cannon, of torrents of blood and heaps of mouldering skulls, for the relief of National Credit, as well as for the restoration of Divine Right?

9. Whether the Political Economists allow the distinction between *productive and unproductive labour*; or whether all labour is equally directed to the good of the community? Whether, for instance, it would be equally patriotic and advisable to employ men to throw corn into the sea or sow it in the ground, to build houses or blow towns into the air, to stand in powdered livery behind a great man's chair, or to participate in useful toil, because all these might be equally paid for? Whether there is or can be such a thing as a waste of the public resources, or whether a kingdom can be or ever was ruined by unwise and profligate rulers?

10. Whether in judging of the condition, the happiness or misery of a people, besides the amount of its resources, something is not to be allowed to their equitable distribution in relieving hardship and diffusing comfort? Whether, for example, when thirty pampered domestics sat down in the servants' hall at Fonthill Abbey, to dine on Westphalia hams boiled in Madeira wine, and other luxuries of the same stamp, while old age staggered under its load of labour, or sickness fainted for want of a glass of wine or a morsel of bread in the neighbourhood,—whether, I say, this was owing to the caprice and ostentation of disproportioned wealth, or to Mr. Malthus's grinding law of necessity, by which not another morsel of bread or drop of wine could possibly be procured beyond what was already demanded to supply the previous wants of a given number of individuals?

11. Whether the difference between a war and peace establishment is not owing to this, that the squandering of so many millions annually, which the Government were borrowing, gave a momentary and dangerous stimulus to the activity of the country, while we now suffer under the payment of the interest of accumulated millions without any fresh influx of principal; just as a spendthrift cuts a great figure while he is squandering and mortgaging his estates, and only looks impoverished and threadbare when his credit is gone, and he has to refund his extravagance?

12. Whether, supposing the debt and the chief of the taxes paid to the fundholder, who contributes nothing at present to the wealth of the country, to be so much drawback from the actual resources, and so much dead-weight to the productive industry of the rest of the community,—whether it does not follow, that the only way to relieve the general distress and remove the pernicious incumbrance, is to strike off great part of the debt, or pay it from some old-standing disposable funds? But it may be said, there is no way of doing this

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without ruining the credit of the Government or the circumstances of the stockholders. If there be no other way of saving the country, what is to be done? If the Government or the stockholders had cared one farthing about reducing us to this dilemma, it would never have arrived!

NOTE.—Mr. Ricardo states war and taxes to be an evil operating negatively upon the resources of a country, just in the same way as a famine or as a diminished fertility. This concession from so great an authority is not enough to meet the case. It is rather like a calamity happening to some particular district, or the burning of a village, the inhabitants of which the rest of the community have to support. In the case of diminished fertility, the whole community suffer necessarily and alike: one half does not lose half of what it possessed by the rigour of the climate, and farther, lose nearly the other half which it retains, to keep a particular class where it was, so that the latter may lose nothing. A general calamity falls equally upon all parties: but the community have to make good the deficiency in the means of the fundholders, which have been squandered by the Government; that is, the one suffer nothing, and the others pay all. In the first case supposed, each party suffers a diminution of half his means; in the other, one party suffers a diminution of half his means, to make good the entire deficiency in those of the other. The instances therefore are not parallel. Besides, the evil in one case incurred is voluntary, and in the other inevitable. But it is thus our Whig philosophers and reformists try to cover a particular grievance by a general law—(too big for it)—and to approximate the acts of Government (which they find they cannot controul) to dispensations of Providence. They by these means *turn the flank* of the Tories, by proving that the measures which others have carried into effect were not their own; and as all the folly and rashness of involving the country in ruinous undertakings rests with the Ministers, the wisdom at least of justifying them on general principles and of expanding them into radical errors in reasoning, belongs to the Political Economists.

## HINTS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

*The Examiner.*

*December 24, 1826.*

THERE appear to me one or two logical fallacies or oversights in Mr. Ricardo's definitions and arguments, like what is called *putting the cart before the horse*, which I will try to point out. In first principles, the smallest error may be fatal, and there are plenty of persons ready to take advantage of it, and to welcome the truth for the sake of the



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error accompanying it. Besides, as the disciples of this school aim at a mathematical precision, they cannot object to a little hypercritical animadversion; or perhaps they will complain of it the more on account of the infallibility of their pretensions, but not with reason.

1. They should not call political economy a science—it is not certainly the *joyeuse science*! If it were a science, it must proceed on fixed and unalterable principles, and could be of no use; for the same mechanical causes must in all cases produce the same mechanical effects, and the world would go on as it has done, in spite of them and their discoveries. They might indeed stand by, and point out the operations of the machine, but could not influence its movements. Whatever depends greatly on human will and opinion (sometimes right and sometimes wrong) is not a science. There is in the phrase too much resemblance to Mr. Malthus's 'grinding law of necessity.' Indeed I see no other tendency in many of these speculations but to turn political abuses into *philosophical fixtures*. But for that, they would never have got into vogue or to the Bar of the House of Commons.

2. Mr. Ricardo defines *value* to be what anything has cost in its production, and this again he makes to depend on the labour necessary to produce it. By this view it would seem that labour and value were one; or that labour never went unrewarded. As far as I understand, on the contrary, the hardest work is in general the worst paid. The poorest are those who work the most and undertake the hardest tasks; and the poorest are not—the richest. Mere drudgery is what mere necessity can compel, and it is always imposed on the necessitous at the lowest rate. As we rise above want we select our employments, and are well paid for them. Sinécures are not the worst-paid offices in the State. Artists, &c. are paid for their skill, genius, and so forth, that is, for the pleasure they give, more than for the pains they take. This would not be the case, if value and labour were the same, as a self-evident principle. But it is well to say so. This, however, is not what I was going to mention. If labour alone were the test of value, then it would only be necessary to bestow so much labour on anything in order to make it of so much value; that is, if a man digs a hole in the ground and fills it up again all day, he will be able to get so much for his trouble, though nothing useful or ornamental comes of it. This is not true. It is only productive labour (of some sort) that is paid for; that is, it is not the quantity of labour that determines the value of anything, but the value of anything, or the money that will be given for it when it is done, that determines the quantity of labour to be bestowed upon it. So that this value must arise out of and be referred to a previous and different principle. Value depends

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on the want (real or imaginary) I have of anything, and the power of another to withhold it from me. Whatever may be the utility of anything, as air or water, I am not disposed to give anything in exchange for it, so long as it is *common* or already in my power. There is no occasion to bribe another to let me have what is not his to give or to withhold. But if I am in a desert or in a dungeon, I will give almost anything short of my life to anyone who will point out to me a spring of clear water, or supply me with a current of fresh air. The imparting this knowledge or indulgence may not cost him dear; but it is of infinite service to me in the given circumstances, and I am willing to pay for it accordingly. Value is regulated by the want which one person has of another person's *property*—money, or wit, or goods. It is the *most* one party will grant, and the *least* the other party will accept. Now this turns on the power of the one to dictate terms to the other, or on who shall hold out longest. It is not limited and defined by the single consideration of the labour a thing has cost. An Arab in the desert will ask me ten times as much for a draught of water to assuage the thirst of which I am nearly perishing as he would ask of another, if he knows I am worth ten times as much. If a thing is mine, and another has a fancy for it, no matter how I came by it—say a diamond I have found or a picture I have picked up by chance—I make the best bargain I can for it. If nobody has a value for it, I set no value upon it, since it would be to no purpose. If only one person has a fancy for it, I must take his price rather than none. But, if several have a desire to possess it, I then naturally dispose of it to the highest bidder. Here comes in competition, which is also different from the *cost of labour*.<sup>1</sup> A man has a landed estate. Is it the produce of his labour, or in fact of any other person's? No: but will he not therefore sell or let it to the best bidder, or get it worked at the lowest rate of wages? What then is this lowest rate of wages? It is so low a rate that no one can be persuaded to work for less. And what is this? That which is dictated by the *last necessity*, a *bare subsistence*, or anything *short of starving*? I deny that any of these are definite, literal, or scientific answers. If 'by anything short of starving' be meant, that with anything less the labourer would expire, I say, that a person just ready to drop down dead is neither willing nor able to work. People in despair will not move a finger. They either

<sup>1</sup> If I have two copies of a book, I readily give one of them away. I am more loth to part with a picture I am fond of than with a print, which it is more easy to replace. But if the print grows scarce, it then becomes valuable, not on account of the greater labour it has cost, but the greater difficulty of procuring it, or the impossibility of the pleasure it conveys being shared by all who have a taste for it, and its necessarily going to the highest bidder, or the person who sets most *value* on and will give most money for it.

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*die off* or come to the parish. See if this is not the case in Ireland? The lowest wages must be therefore something short of this *something short of starving*, or of the last necessity. It means then only so small a share of the produce of labour that no one will work for less, which is a perfectly indefinite term, or a thing of common consent, for one will always ask as much as another can get; and this again depends on the value and necessity of labour to the proprietor of land or capital, and on the degree of independence, of intelligence and combination among the workmen. If anyone says that there is a fixed limit, *viz.* the lowest, or the *minimum* of subsistence,—first, this has no meaning;—secondly, it is not true either in fact or theory, or else the condition of the labourer would be always the same at all times and places, the worst possible and no ways to be amended,—‘a consummation devoutly to be wished’ by some persons, but not (one would think) by philanthropists and reformers. The condition of the poor or of the mass of mankind will not be ameliorated by making a *science* of the caprice, insolence, luxury, prejudices, and insensibility of the rich! We hear much talk of the *disturbed districts*, but there could be no *disturbed districts* according to the above doctrine; or rather they must always be *disturbed*, that is, in the lowest state of wretchedness and want, whether there was work or no work, plenty or famine, peace or war:—they must always be kept down to the point of starving, in the most prosperous circumstances, and yet they could not be quite starved, or they would cease to be *disturbed*. The laws of nature or of the land do not proceed by quite so severe a logic as the new School of Economy. Again, the adepts in this School cry out, that if we had but a pestilence, all would do well: that after a pestilence in former and more favoured periods, it appears by the Statute-Books that the price of labour was often tripled, from the greater demand for labourers, as in the reign of Edward III—they grow wanton, impatient, frantic in enlarging on this topic—‘Oh! if they had but a pestilence, it would remedy all our complaints, and demonstrate all *their* theories!’ So far from it, it would overturn them all, for it would prove that the rate of wages is not identified by any natural or technical necessity with the lowest wretchedness, but varies with circumstances and opportunity, or is the best bargain the labourer, with the aid of others, can make for himself. If it be urged, that without the pestilence we should not have sufficient food for such a number of mouths, or for the *surplus* population, Mr. Malthus’s horse can resolve that question. A pestilence among the brute creation would answer all the romantic views of the Political Economists as well as among the human species. Or would not a swinging tax upon *pleasure-horses* answer the same purpose a little?

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But this would be infringing on the luxuries of the rich, which is the whole secret of Mr. Malthus's 'grinding law of necessity!'<sup>1</sup> But to proceed :—

3. According to Mr. Ricardo, Rent is the difference between the produce of the best and the worst land in cultivation; so that the Rent rises as worse land is brought into cultivation, and it seems as if but for this worst land there would be no rent, supposing the definition to be explicit and conclusive. Now this again (I take it) is *putting the cart before the horse*. For what is it that determines this worse land to be brought into cultivation but its affording a subsistence to the labourer; or what determines the limit of the worst land brought into cultivation, but that it affords such a subsistence no longer? So that the worst soil brought into cultivation depends upon the rate of subsistence, not the rate of subsistence upon the worst soil brought into cultivation; and the rent is the difference between the total produce of the soil in any circumstances, and the price of labour necessary to maintain it. If it were not so, a single acre of still worse land enclosed would generally raise the rent of all the estates in a country; which is absurd. In Mr. Ricardo's view, it appears as if Rent was a necessary and specific consequence of a difference in the soil, which is a positive thing and an undeniable matter of fact; but look closer, and you find it depends on the difference of the soil *brought into cultivation*; which is a variable and arbitrary result of human will and feeling, of moral and political calculations, of the habitual wants and comforts of the labourer. By referring Rent to a physical or material criterion, *viz.* the difference of soil, Rent becomes a fixed and unavoidable *residuum*;—by referring it to the true criterion, the maintenance of labour, it becomes subject to moral influences and humane principles. Again: Suppose the land to be all equally good, would not the same result follow from its limited extent, as in the former case from its inferior fertility? Suppose one individual to have the property of a hundred acres of good land,—that is, a right to prevent others from making any advantage of them,—would he not be able to appropriate a certain share of the produce of these hundred acres to himself, for liberty granted to ten other persons to cultivate it and to get a living from it; and would not this be Rent? The doctrine of Rent then does not properly rest on the basis of a natural variation of the soil. That circumstance may be set aside and is wholly irrelevant to the question, except as a collateral

<sup>1</sup> When I walk along the streets of London, thronged as they are with carriages and horses, and see a beggar thrust from a door on the plea that there is not another morsel of food to supply the *surplus* population, I know what to think of an age and country that can tolerate such a sophism as one of the first laws of God and Nature.

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illustration. Suppose an island of a hundred square miles in extent, and of the finest soil throughout, would not the people multiply in this indefinitely? And the supply of labourers being beyond the demand, would they not be ready to work for lower wages, or (what is called) a bare subsistence, rather than starve, just as much as if there were a regular alternation of the richest and poorest soils? Is the distress and poverty of Ireland owing to its extreme inequality of surface or extreme cultivation; and not to its extreme barbarism and ignorance, plunging it into want and not teaching it to provide for its necessities? Man had rather *be* than *not be*; he had rather work than starve. This is the foundation of the doctrine of Rent. But he prefers well-being to a bare subsistence, plenty to want, if he is not prevented by force. Suppose from any circumstances the wages of labour generally to be double what they are, the effect would be to lower the profits of landholders and capitalists, and to make men less inclined to emigrate or to plant themselves on heaths and commons. There is a certain quantity of wealth and comfort, of necessities and luxuries, in every community: in what portions they shall be divided among the many or monopolised by the few, depends upon the power of the last or the knowledge and mutual understanding of the first, and not on the richness of this or the barrenness of that soil.

4. As to the question of *Absenteeism* (Alas! poor Lady Morgan!) I would beg leave to put this case—Suppose the Noble Lord or Absentee to go no farther than Liverpool (the inference may be removed afterwards to Paris or Florence) and to lay out ten guineas on a picture of himself there: is not this ten guineas taken from the Dublin artist and his heirs for ever, and given to the Liverpool one? But it is said the English artist sends it over to purchase a piece of Irish linen. So would the Irish artist probably lay the money out in the same manner; but then the shirts would be worn for the honour of Ireland, whereas in the latter case he goes without one, and his Liverpool rival reaps all the benefit. Time, it is again argued, remedies this; things come round, and industry and talent find out new channels. At least, it takes time to do this, and time is something lost. I do not see that things come round, nor why they should *go round*. How is it likely or possible that industry should find out new channels, when the funds are taken away that are necessary to supply them? If the loose cash or the settled income of the Absentee goes to encourage and excite industry abroad, it must proportionably languish at home; for money can no more be laid out or produce its natural effects in two places at once, than the Noble Lord can be in two places at once, or pay two butchers, two bakers, two house-

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builders (one foreign and one native) with the same sum of money that is already wholly expended in paying one of them. Nor is it true that the money will come back through other channels. It might as well be pretended that a field on one estate will be the richer for carrying a load of manure to another. One of the properties of wealth is *locality*—it acts where it is; and shifts its residence from time to time, and from place to place. If commerce like the sea always found its own level, its channels like those of the sea would be always full. Wherever there were hands and mouths, the one would be always employed, and the other satisfied. How far from the truth! But the obvious fact is, that any portion of wealth (national or individual) applied to stimulate one branch of industry or support one class of labourers, is so much taken from another as long as that application continues, and hence we see one state rise upon the ruins of another, one manufacturer flourish as another decays, &c. *Where the carcass is, there the eagles are gathered together.*—Money is not like a political paradox, that can be sported anywhere and everywhere as a matter of perfect indifference—that is first locked up in a bureau, then finds its way into a *wiseacre* review, then perches on a rostrum, and is at last put upon its original shelf again—and which, whether present or absent, stupid England is none the better for it, and solemn Scotland never feels its loss.

5. Abstract principles of political economy or of anything else are only good when acted upon generally. Mr. Huskisson was therefore wrong in enforcing his doctrines upon the Spitalfields weavers till he could give them their revenge on the landlords. *Experimentum in corpore vili.* Those are made its victims who have least power to resist, and who suffer most by it. Philosophy is come upon our legislators unawares; and they are eager to practise it upon somebody. But metaphysics are bad things by halves. Who would have supposed that Mr. Peel would at this time of day take up the exploded, unfashionable cues of Bentham, Romilly, and Mackintosh, with respect to our penal laws? It is to be hoped, that from this time a Reformer will not be considered as ‘no better than a house-breaker.’ Mr. Peel borrows the gloss of popularity from the stale maxims of modern philosophy, as a child picks the gold-leaf from his ginger-bread. The ‘No-Popery’ alarmist turned into a Reform-Minister reminds one of the chimney-sweeper decked out as a Jack-of-the-Green.

‘Miraturque novos fructus et non sua poma.’

Yet for this the *New Times* awards him ‘a purer admiration than is due to Lord Bacon.’ His editor, Mr. Montagu, deserves it better, who with great industry and humanity published four octavo volumes

## ILLUSTRATIONS OF TORYISM

on the abolition of capital punishments, which are never inflicted. Yet it is well to abolish a mockery of law and justice, and to set aside the antiquated and useless. But if Mr. Peel begins with abrogating the antiquated and useless, where will he end?

### ILLUSTRATIONS OF TORYISM—FROM THE WRITINGS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

*The Sphinx.*

January 5, 1828.

THE definition of Toryism is, that it is that feeling or turn of mind which refers every thing to custom or habit, and mistakes the sense of power for the sense of right and wrong. It has no conception that any thing is possible but what has been, or that any thing can be wrong that has authority on its side. It has no measure of truth or reason but prejudice, nor any notion of justice but servility. Let a thing be new (though ever so true or good), the Tory cannot make up his mind to it,—he abhors it,—makes faces at it,—is now angry,—now laughs at the idea of it,—and there is no meanness, ribaldry, or malice, to which he will not resort to excite the same disgust and incredulity that he feels, for no other reason than that *he is deaf to reason*! On the other hand, let a thing be old, and likely to last for ever, and he will admire, applaud, and doat on it the more, the more unjust and hateful it is, for this only inspires him with a proportionable awe and servile fear. A Tory may be a poet, but no Tory can be a philosopher; for he has not even the capacity of conceiving an abstract proposition. As his conclusions have no principle of truth or justice to rest on, but mere prejudice and interest, so there are no means, however unfair, venal, or contemptible, of which he will not avail himself to keep up the delusion in his own mind, or to impose on the folly of mankind. A nick-name is the *ne plus ultra* of Tory logic. Why? Because it implies a strong degree of mechanical hatred and contempt, without assigning any reason for it. What any thing *is* in reality, or what it *ought to be* in justice, are questions alien to Tory faculties; they only consider (from narrowness of understanding and from sordid selfishness) what it *has been*, or how it can be made to last, so as to plague the world, and serve themselves and their patrons. This is the definition. Now for a few examples, which, we think, must be decisive of the point; for if the ‘AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY’ cannot escape the contagion, who else can hope to be free from it?

I. ‘Such was the celebrated compact by which Pius VII. surrendered to a soldier, *whose name was five or six years before unheard of in Europe*, those high claims to supremacy in spiritual affairs, which his pre-

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decessors *had maintained for so many ages* against the whole potentates of Europe.'

This passage is very innocent, but it shows the habitual bias of the writer's mind to judge of things by putting back their dates from what they are to what they have been. If Buonaparte had forced the Pope to sign the Concordat five or six years before, when his name was utterly unknown, it would indeed have been something to wonder at; or if the Pope had still been what his predecessors were, it would have admitted of a question; but what Buonaparte had done in those five or six years, or what the Pope had lost in four or five centuries, is not here brought into the comparison. A battle is gained or lost in a twinkling; and Buonaparte did not want more than five or six years to fight as many battles, each almost decisive of the fate of a kingdom. It might as well be thought strange, that an author, whose real fame commenced with the publication of 'Waverley,' should, in five or six years' time, be considered equal to the oldest and greatest writers that ever lived. We judge of authors and conquerors by what they have done, not as we do of kings and nobles, by what they were destined to be before they were born.

II. 'The sentiments of the Princes of the Royal Family upon such a subject' (assassinating the First Consul) 'were becoming their high rank. They were resolved to combat Buonaparte's pretensions with open force, such as befitted their pretensions as head of the *chivalry* of France, but to leave to *Jacobins* the schemes of private assassination' (referring to a *royalist plot* to destroy him by the Infernal Machine).

In the first place, this is not true: but that is a trifle. There is a poetical truth or justice in it: it befits the high idea which the writer has of the rank of certain personages to admit nothing but what is flattering to them; or if there were any doubt on the subject, the phrase, *chivalry of France*, removes it. Who will connect any base associations with that high-sounding epithet? What fine romantic visions are not conjured up by the bare term; and who will be perverse enough to cavil at its application? At the mere suggestion, all Buonaparte's generals sink into base-born clowns and plebeians; and though no feats of arms or of heroic endurance are on record, the blank is easily filled up with the magical word, *chivalry*. Servility exercises the same voluntary power of imagination as fiction. What we want is not the word that corresponds to the truth, but that enhances the imposture. There is a political as well as a dramatic illusion. Oh! poetry, what hast thou to answer for!

III. 'He inquired anxiously into abuses, and was particularly active in correcting those which had crept into the prisons during the Revolution, where great tyranny was exercised by monopoly of



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provisions and otherwise. *In amending such evils, Buonaparte, though not of kingly birth, showed a mind worthy of the rank to which he had ascended.*

It should seem then that such virtues are common to those of kingly birth, who can do quite as well without them, but that activity and attention to public affairs were something extraordinary in one who had only these to help him to a throne. Hereditary kings are then proverbially men of talent and business! This may be very courtly, and a prudent salvo for the admission that Buonaparte did any good; but it is not historically true. What becomes of the *Rois Fainéants*? Were they the exception, and not the rule? According to this *make-believe* style, a man who is born a king, without any effort or merit of his own, nay, though he should be little better than a changeling, is to be complimented with all the stirring qualities and bustling habits necessary to make him one.

IV. 'With a similar and more laudable attention to the duties of his high office, Buonaparte founded plans for education, and particularly, with *Monge's* assistance, established the Polytechnic school, which has produced so many men of talent.'

We notice this, because here, as elsewhere, the name of Monge is spelt with the accent over the *é*, as Fouché's is spelt without it. This might be owing to carelessness or ignorance of such technical points: but it is not so, it is an affectation of ignorance, and a miscalling, to show contempt and superiority, as if it did not signify how the names of such people were pronounced. Monge offered his two daughters to the two first volunteers who should be wounded in defence of their country in 1792; and, therefore, he is set down as *Citizen Mongé*. So La Fayette is sometimes Citizen and sometimes Monsieur La Fayette, so as best to convey a sneer. Is it possible that the 'Author of *Waverley*' (for the book goes in his name) can imagine that others are degraded by such puny indignities, and not himself? Suppose any one were to talk of *Mister* Walter Scott, or the *Sieur* Scott, by way of letting him down in public estimation, on whom would the real vulgarity and debasement recoil? But Tory spite, which is not founded on reason, but on mere personal prejudice and antipathy, [thinks] that whatever irritates and feeds its idiot or its fiend-like rancour, justifies it; and never inquiring or caring whether it is right or wrong, never scruples any the most paltry or dirty means to carry its unprincipled object into effect. Such pitiful warfare as that of spelling names wrong, or giving improper titles, would, on the other side, be scouted as the lowest buffoonery and indecency, but being directed against Republicans and Jacobins, it is of the court, courtly: any mode of conveying contempt is good enough for them, as any the most nauseous

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or flimsy cant about legitimacy is accepted as sterling and unquestionable praise. It shows the low arts to which servility is reduced, and the insolence of power.

V. In another place, Sir Walter speaks of the Bourbons as a line of kings that had given sixty-six sovereigns to the throne of France, as if this were a triumphant reason why it should give sixty-six more. And so it is according to the principles of prescription and custom, but not at all on those of reason. As an object of imagination, every one of these kings was better than the last; as the head of a state, the first was probably the best. Every thing is in Tory politics referred to the aggrandisement of the individual. A few leading characters, or prominent situations, are brought forward and decked out for dramatic effect: the people, the good of society, general principles, are thrown entirely in the background, or only come in as chorus or mob. Such reasoning is essentially and demonstrably false. The imagination has not a stage large enough to rehearse politics in. According to it, the part is always greater than the whole; for the imagination embodies one, or a few individual objects, but it has no means of doing justice to a million, whose interests or rights can only be expressed by a general principle, for which the imagination has no language; and, therefore, in this language, (the language of poets and romance-writers, not of philosophers or historians,) the million is always sacrificed to the individual. This is the very essence of Toryism.

## DEFINITION

*The Atlas.*

March 22, 1829.

THE science of Political Economy means the *divine right* of landlords.

## THE TITHES

*The Atlas.*

February 7, 1830.

LET us have a touch at political economy this week—the farmers *versus* the tithes. We are not going to commit ourselves to any opinion as to the justice or injustice, the policy or impolicy of an abrogation or commutation of the tithes—that is a point beyond the sphere of our ability or our duty: we merely profess to take up one part of the subject, or a sort of *previous question* moved in the debate, which is, that if the tithes were done away with, the farmers would be none the better for it. This, like most of the other discoveries of the SCIENCE, is contrary to the common rules of arithmetic, to say nothing of common sense, for which these gentlemen profess a sovereign

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contempt and aversion. We are neither theologians nor jurists to pronounce upon the sacredness and validity of church-property; but we hate false arguments and *cats'-paw* logic, which that of the economists generally is. These very grave personages, with their gaunt looks and formal pretences, stand like undertakers at the door of Reform; and though there is death in the house, will not let you in to see what is the matter, as it is to no purpose; or, like a troop of hooded crows, strut and croak, and pick the flesh off the bones of the state, and swear that there is neither pith nor marrow left in them. A dealer in carrion in the borough of Southwark wrote up over his door by way of attracting customers, 'All my delight is in a dead horse': so these scientific purveyors of corruption and abuse, plainly give you to understand, that all their delight is in the mangled hopes and mortified expectations of society. Their constant theme is, that no change can take place for the better that will not come round to the same point, or turn out for the worse, in order to keep things in *statu quo*; and having finished a learned lucubration to that effect, write up from the north of Berwick-upon-Tweed for place, pension, or professorship under the infallible and irremediable system, of which they have established the basis on the sure principle that, if you take a part from the whole, the sum-total will remain what it was, and if you add one thing to another, it will be no bigger than it was before. For instance, it is said that if the tithes were abolished, the farmer would be no better for it, inasmuch as the benefit would immediately pass from him in an increased rate of rent to the landlords. Now if the rent of land were (as these arguers pretend) a fixed and invariable thing, and the farmer were always able and willing to pay that stated sum, then there would be neither rise nor fall in it. The valuation of farms might be left in the hands of fate or Providence, of which the political economists only come forward as proxies. But here the shoe pinches. The farmer says, 'I neither can nor will pay my accustomed rent, owing to the weight of taxes, the decrease of profits, the hardness of the times, &c. But if, to make up for this deficiency of means, I am allowed to keep the tithes (or a considerable part of them) in my own hands, instead of their being fetched away by the parson of the parish, then I can and will make good my old bargain with my landlord, as much as if my old profits were restored, or any other heavy burden taken off; and *both* will be the better for it—he in the receipt of his rent, and I in being able to pay that rent (from this additional assistance) without any diminution of my gains, or retrenchment on my mode of living.' It is difficult to conceive what answer can be given to such a statement in the way of common experience or business; but the political economist is above all this

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—he has a theory, in virtue of which he assumes that a certain standard rent *must* be paid by the tenant, whether he does or can pay it or not ; and starting from this as a fixed point, he takes it for granted that all that the farmer gets beyond this, either in a rise of prices or a release from taxes or from tithes, must become a deodand to the landlord, as much as for an increase in the value of the land, or in the size of a farm. So that, supposing him to have got enough by the retention of tithes—that is, a tenth of the produce of the land with all his expenses upon it, to make good his yearly payment, he would then find this seeming advantage slip suddenly through his fingers, and he would be left just where he was, that is, the landlord would compel him by his sovereign authority, and with Mr. Ricardo's treatise in his hand, not only to pay up the whole of his previous rent which the tithes would enable him to do, but to make over to him in addition the amount of the tithes, which alone enabled him to discharge his old debt. This, with leave be it spoken, is great impudence or great nonsense. It is supposed, in the very agitation of the question, that the farmer, by the state of the country, by the reduction of prices, or some other *variable cause*, is straitened in meeting quarter-day in comparison with former times : how is he to be relieved, except by taking off the pressure in some other quarter—for example, the tax which the church lays upon him ? ‘Oh ! but,’ it is said, ‘if that indulgence be extended to him, it will do him no good ; for the moment he gets it, it would be cheating the landlord if he did not make it over to him in acknowledgment of the increased profits of the land over and above the settled and unvarying price which he has always paid for it.’ Now the whole question turns upon this, that the tenant can no longer without loss or ruin, under existing circumstances, pay that original price, which these gentlemen take to be as demonstrable and invariable a thing as any proposition in Euclid. We may say then, that there is in some part of their reasoning *hiatus in manuscriptis*. The land, during the war, or under certain circumstances, could support three persons according to a style of living which they conceived to be their due—to wit, the farmer, the landlord, and the parson. Under the present circumstances it can support only two out of the three. Well, say that the parson is excluded (or curtailed at least) as the interloper ? What then hinders the other two from falling back to their old *jog-trot* way of settling matters ? Nothing but the theory of the *political economists*, which, by a mathematical process, gives the landlord all he can get, and something more into the bargain. There are two persons sitting down to a roast pullet with greens and bacon ; a knock is heard at the door, it is the clergyman of the place ; they deny themselves to the new and uninvited guest,

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and finish their repast amicably, though the squire may be helped to the breast and wings, and the farmer be contented with the legs and *parson's nose*. Had the rector been had in, there would have been enough for none of the party. This is all the political economy concerned in the case. As to the school in general, with their 'grinding law of necessity' to be applied at their option to do mischief and defeat the possibility of good, they are an ill-omened and ill-favoured set. Hogarth has depicted them all in his 'Overseer in Bridewell'—from the florid population-abstract man to the pallid *absentee* evidence, who wanted to argue the Irish out of eating potatoes! We repeat, that in the foregoing remarks we mean to give no opinion as to the eligibility of the suggestion at issue, or any modification of it. We have used the term 'Parson' without any disrespect. If we had substituted 'Divine,' it might have seemed ironical; 'Clergyman' would have been prim and precise.

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POLITICAL Economy has been called a science, I do not know why, except in the sense that you cannot have your cake and eat it, or that if a thing consists of so many parts, the more you add to one heap, the less will remain of the other. But this is by no means the application that has been made of it. On the contrary, the whole object of the science has been to shew that by giving to the rich, you take nothing from the poor. Mine is, I hope, an honest view of it. This same honesty is, I know, by some accounted foolishness, and so it may be as to the individual, but not as to the subject. For my part, I wish for no higher wisdom than which arises from a mind perfectly free from every selfish and sinister bias. I have been advised to write a critical essay, and I think I could do it, on this very subject. I should be like the fellow who came up from Edinburgh with a barrel-organ at his back and expected at least to pass for a Rossini: I should begin with the geometrical and arithmetical series, the praise of Mr. Malthus's originality, logic, and humanity, pass to the doubling of the population every twenty-five years in the United States of America, digress to the cultivation of the potatoe in Ireland, which country I should abuse because it is not Scotland, recommend the education of the poor as preventive of mobs, and conclude with a sublime eulogy of the science of political economy as 'fairly worth the seven.'

I. I shall begin with what I think of more importance or at least newer; the refutation of the aristocratic sophism that war and taxes do not impoverish a country. Now if that were the case, why do we

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go to war with our enemies as a punishment, instead of inflicting it on our friends as a benefit or idle amusement at worst? It is pretended that the taxes which are raised to support war are presently returned into the hands of the payers, and that the community receive back in the payment of labour, in the encouragement of arts and industry, all that has been previously taken out of their pockets, just as the water drawn from the earth in vapours descends to it in genial and refreshing showers. But if the poor are none the worse for the taxes, those who receive them, the rich or the government, can be none the better; why then collect them? Again, one part of the community being indebted to another has been compared to a man and his wife playing at cards, where the family loses nothing: but a man and his wife do not pay, at least if they have a common purse, so that nothing is gained by this simile. The way in which war and taxes do injury is in two particulars: (1) by waste or unproductive labour; (2) by throwing the money of the community into masses by monopolies, places, &c., bestowed at the discretion of the government.

(1) The greater part of the expences of war are laid out in means of annoyance only to other nations, not in anything serviceable to your own; in making gunpowder, in building or blowing up ships of war, in burning towns, laying waste countries, &c., &c. Now all that is laid out in this way is so much wealth and useful labour diverted from the proper objects of political economy (except in case of absolute necessity, which does not alter the question of expence) such as the cultivation of the ground, the building of houses, the making of articles of use and convenience, &c. If war were in itself a thriving trade, governments could carry it on upon commercial principles, and, having once a capital to begin with, grow richer every year, instead of having to come to the people for fresh supplies and to pay the interest of the principal which is always sunk. But government is always a heavy tax upon the country, and war, their most expensive occupation, for the most part a merely destructive art. If we consider the stock-in-trade of a government at the end of a war, and ask what they would get by setting up to auction the hulls of disabled vessels, empty gunpowder casks, the battered walls of ruined fortresses, we need pursue the inquiry no farther to make up our minds on the subject of the lucrative nature of war establishments. Those governments that make great conquests of territory or treasure, &c., or secure a monopoly of trade, gain but what the others lose in proportion, and all the labour and expence of carrying on the war and effecting the transfer is a drain on the natural resources and prosperity of one or both countries. The reason why a country seems to flourish in war time is that capital is then drawn out and forced into circulation every year, but in a way

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that produces no return, and, as this must be paid for afterwards, hangs a dead weight round the neck of the industry of a country ever after, and the longer it is persisted in, grows worse, like the effects of all intemperance and violent momentary excitement. Mr. Southey says that war was a customer to the Birmingham and Sheffield market to the amount of sixteen millions yearly : if this was a sheer benefit, and not in the end a sheer loss, why not continue the war nominally, that is, keep on ordering the goods, and fire off cannon and brandish swords innocently in the air ? The war would be equally a customer to the market, only less blood would be shed and less malice engendered.

(2) It is argued that though large fortunes are amassed in war by government contracts, or large revenues, salaries, pensions, &c. bestowed on particular individuals and families at the expence of the people, this does not signify in the least, or is indeed rather a good, inasmuch as the money returns into the pockets of the people again in the shape of payments for labour, building fine houses, making rich furniture, maintaining large establishments of servants, &c. Now this is very fine talking : but the question lies here—for whose benefit is all this ? The labour of the community is paid for, it is true, but so it would be if the money had remained in the hands of the mass of the community, and in that case the produce of the labour would have gone to benefit the community at large, whereas by being accumulated into the hands of a few it goes to pamper and indulge the luxury of these few. Thus, the same number of hands would be employed and maintained in building ten comfortable living houses or one splendid mansion : so far, in the payment of labour, the effect is the same, but all the difference lies in the good resulting from the labour ; in the one case ten families are commodiously lodged, in the other, one is magnificently lodged and the other nine have no roof to shelter them.

This rule holds proportionably with respect to the results of all unequal division of property. No one will pretend but, if the money had been left originally in the hands of the ten persons, they would have agreed voluntarily to this application of it, but not to the building of one fine house for one fine gentleman and going without any themselves ; it is therefore forced, injurious, and, unless necessary (which is seldom the case), unjust. So with respect to household furniture, articles of luxury, &c. If the public agree upon some magnificent public work, that is another question ; it is voluntary and calculated to gratify the public eye and taste and not to pamper the pride and egotism of an individual. So in the maintenance or support of arts, it ought to proceed from the free will of individuals, not from forced contributions on the public. Nothing can be clearer than that the salaries of actors and public performers are well earned : they are fixed

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by the number of those who go to see, not by a vote of a treasury bench. No one will maintain, I should think, that all labour is equally good and useful, if equally well paid : or that it is not the work produced or who reaps the benefit of it, but the paying of the workmen, that forms the whole sum and substance of political economy. If so, the paying a man for doing nothing, for digging a hole in the ground and filling it up again, and standing at the back of another's chair, would be equally useful and indispensable to the welfare of the community as the employing him in the most necessary sorts of labour, the cultivation of the ground, &c. Or if so, it would be equally wise and politic to pay a man for destroying corn or other wholesome food after it was raised as for raising it, or pulling down a wall and building it up again. This also shews the inutility of paying for mere labour, which is mere idleness if it does no good. Men may as well stand still as use their hands to no purpose ; throwing sand into the sea, for instance. All the use of labour is to multiply the products of art or nature, and whatever does this with least expence or trouble is best, and leaves an opening for employing the surplus labour in lightening other labour, which cannot be so well abridged. This is the use of machines. If the surplus hands are not wanted to do the labour which is bestowed, say, on agriculture, they may at least be usefully employed in dividing it. Thus the lacqueys of the great must eat, if they were farmers' men, but they would not in that case eat more, and the farmers' men would work less, and not be absolutely ground into the earth as they are at present. Q.E.D.

II. A great deal has been said on the doctrine of rent and on the definition of value, as it appears to me without sufficient accuracy or foundation. For example, it has been laid down as a rule that the value of any thing depends invariably on the cost and labour necessary to produce it. Now if so, and if this be the only circumstance, then any thing on which the same labour has been bestowed, would be of equal value, which is absurd. If a thing when done is of no use, all the labour and expence in the world bestowed on it will not make it of value ; so that besides prime cost, usefulness or desirableness must come into a good definition of value. If another wants any thing very much and it has cost me a great deal to make or get it, I of course make him pay the more for it ; but he will not do this, unless his desire of the thing, that is, the use it is of to him, is greater than his want of the money for other purposes. Value depends on two things, the want which one person has of a thing, and the power of another to withhold it from him till he can get no more for it. I will give a familiar instance. Suppose a person to have just given ten guineas for a watch which he is from some circumstance forced to pawn : how



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much will he get for it? According to the above definition of value, it is worth and will fetch just as much as it has cost. No such thing. The immediate distress of the person is known by the circumstance of his wanting to sell it, and the purchaser will offer him not what it has cost but the lowest possible sum that his necessities may compel him to take for it. Thus then it appears that the ability to take advantage of another's distress enters into the principle of value or bargain-making, and that the rich and powerful have consequently and at all times an advantage over the poor in this respect. The other definition, I grant, looks fair and plausible, as if industry was always rewarded, and every thing was paid for according to its practical value, so that society was a perfect piece of mechanism, and all its distributions and awards were attended with a more than poetical, a mathematical justice. It may answer the views of the great landholders and capitalists to be told this, and of our place-hunting philosophers to tell it them! Again, it is pretended that Rent is a mechanical and invariable quantity, being the exact amount of the difference between the richest and the poorest soils brought into cultivation. Now this again under a mask of mathematical precision is a fallacy, and a taking for granted the very point in dispute as a self-evident proposition. For what is the poorest soil brought into cultivation? Not that beyond which as a fixed limit any cultivation whatever is impossible, as the barren rock, but that, the cultivation of which will no longer adequately reward or maintain the labourer. So the price of labour, over which the surplus produce of the soil is Rent, does not depend on physical boundary, or a soil of a certain degree of barrenness, but the degree of poverty in the soil brought into cultivation will depend on a moral calculation, what is the adequate reward of labour? This, however, has been attempted to be reduced to a *minimum* by saying the smallest wage that will support life: which is another verbal fallacy, delightful for those to contemplate who wish to keep their money in their pockets by the advice of sophists *et cum privilegio philosophiæ*, but of no other coherence or validity whatever; for a man who is merely kept alive is not in a condition to work, much less to work hard, and the interval between *just famishing* and *well off* in the condition of the labouring classes is a wide, indefinite, and important one, though it is a logical point with these reasoners who feel strong in the badness of their cause. It is some difference whether a man has one or two meals a day, whether he has meat for his dinner once a week or not, whether he does or does not lie, coarsely indeed, but warm, whether he is in rags or decently and comfortably clad? All these distinctions are looked down upon from the lofty heights of Political Economy Lecture-Desks, and lost in the cant phrase, *the lowest*

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*possible means of subsistence.* If we suppose property to be limited, all the same consequences will follow with respect to landlord and labourer, with or without the inequality in the goodness of the soil: for he who has no land of his own to till must till that of another *for a consideration*, and this consideration will depend not on the gradations of natural soil but on the degrees of spirit, intelligence, and previous habits of comfort and what they conceive to be their rights in the poorer members of the community. It is a mere question of haggling in the market, and he who has saved a little money and knows that others are of his way of thinking as to what is the *fair rate* of wages, will stand a better chance in holding out against their reduction either direct or indirect than he who being without resource or advantage lies at the mercy of a merciless dictator and tyrant who the more helpless and depressed he is depresses him the more and calls it justice, appealing to Mr. Malthus and the Scotch polemics, who damn men to starve in this world with the same eagerness and malignity that they formerly damned them to eternal torments in the other. 'We cannot give up our Hell,' in one way or other. If one acre of bad ground is brought into cultivation, will this reduce the price of labour to that level? I say then that the maximum of wages depends on the human will, or conventional, not physical, causes; on the resolution to demand and the power to withhold, and if society pleases, the wages may be doubled as they may be reduced to one half; or that in what proportions the actual produce of the soil is shared up to absolute equality, is not a thing of necessity, but choice. The tables are not full, while one person devours the produce of the labour of two, any more than the pit is full, while one person occupies two places or chuses to keep a place for a friend.

It was stated the other day in the papers that the effects that might result to the community and to civilisation in general from Mr. Gurney's new invention of a steam-carriage to run on common roads, were incalculable, alluding to the immense number of horses now kept for stage coaches and the saving of all that expence or turning it into a different channel for the support and growth of food for human beings. Now these consequences (however confessedly great) could not extend much farther than to bring the country back to where it was eighty or a hundred years [ago], before, as we may say, the invention of stage-coaches; yet this assertion and sanguine prediction was made by one who holds any attempt at interference with Mr. Malthus's grinding law of necessity or the mechanical effects of population on determining the results of human happiness and comfort as wholly absurd and fruitless. If so much benefit can be done to society by a single invention in leaving so much disposeable food for the human population, who shall

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say what good cannot be done by other inventions or discoveries? But at any rate, it must be granted by the persons so arguing that this portion of subsistence has been artificially drawn off from the support of the mass of the community to pamper the pride or pleasure of the idle or the wealthy in riding in stage-coaches. The load that has been laid on the produce and industry of the country will now, it is said, be taken off by one man's ingenuity and science: it must therefore have been laid on by accidental circumstances and combinations, and not by unalterable and inevitable principles.

III. Those who run their heads against Mr. Malthus's general doctrine that population may increase faster than and beyond the means of subsistence only run their heads against a post: all that can be done is to deny his sovereign right over this doctrine as the inventor and legislator of it, to shew his illogicality and inconsistency in reasoning upon what was not his own, and his perverse and partial application of a general and important principle. The principle of population applies to all created beings: but we hear of it only in relation to the poor and their encroachments on the higher classes, as if the latter did not breed and were not more likely to weigh down the general population than to be weighed down by it. For instance, the law of primogeniture leaves all the younger branches of rich and noble families to be provided for as adventurers by the state: they are in truth, as they have been forcefully denominated, '*state paupers*'; it is not likely, however, that with the notions and habits with which they are brought up they will abate an inch of their dignity or luxurious and expensive style of living, and may we not hence account (that is, from the doubling of the aristocratic and pensioned part of the population and their maintenance in suitable style and affluence for the honour of the Corinthian capital of polished society) for the degradation and impoverishment of the lower classes, without supposing them to be doubled in like manner? I asked a labouring peasant if he thought the distress in the neighbourhood arose from the increase of the working poor, or from there not being work enough for them to do? He said, No, that there were not more than were sufficient to do the necessary labour in harvest-time, in seed-time, and at other periods, and that if they had to do certain things in summer, they must be kept alive in winter. They could not go to sleep like flies. I asked, if he thought there were more people in the place than there used to be? He said not, but the expence of living was twice what it was when he was a young man thirty years ago, and the wages were no higher than they were then. He said he and his father and brother could then get a shilling a piece a day by hard labour, and that he got no more now to maintain his whole family, which could not be done. A quartern

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loaf, he said, then was sevenpence, now it was a shilling or fourteen pence. Mutton was 2d. or 3d. a pound instead of 6d. or 7d. Bacon in like manner : butter was also 5d. or 6d. which now cost 11d. in the market. So that in truth a poor family was reduced to live upon half of what it then did, that is, if the doctrine of the modern economists be true, they live upon the half of the lowest possible means that it is possible to live upon. He added that formerly a poor man's wife and children got something considerable as a help by spinning and other handicraft, which was now done away ; but he allowed that in this respect the machines had done as much good as harm by cheapening gowns and clothes of different descriptions. My informant also considered the inclosing of commons as a hardship on the poor (and no advantage to the rich), by depriving them of the means of keeping a pig, two or three geese or fowls, perhaps even a cow, &c. He said the land was of no use to its owners on a large scale, and was only good to be pecked and nibbled at in a small way and by those on the spot. Now then here is the fact that the labouring population has not doubled, but the price of provisions has, that of labour remaining the same, so that the condition of the poor is doubly more wretched and uncomfortable than it was, and I attribute this result to the increase of taxes, wars, pensions and large fortunes got by monopolies, &c., to maintain an over-abundant oligarchy in their wonted ease and insolence, which, the production being truly limited, can only be done by pressing upon and robbing by legislative enactment the already poor and oppressed classes.

IV. Tythes. Mr. Burke says, 'The people of England like to see 10 or 20,000 pounds a year in the hands of a Bishop of London or Ely as well as in the hands of this Squire or that Earl,' and Tom Paine says this may be true, but that they like neither. The argument of our economists is that the tythes are taken from the landlord, and not from the farmer or the poor. That is, the farmer will give less to the landlord for land with this tax of one-tenth of all the produce of it : and will be able to pay his workmen just the same. The farmer will not then pay the landlord (if he can help it) for the tenth sheaf which goes into the parson's pocket, but will he pay the labourer for raising that which does not go into his own ? Suppose instead of a tenth it were a fifth or a fourth, so as to press close indeed under some of the parties. Who would be the sufferer ? The clergyman has nothing to do with it but to receive the net produce : the landlord then is to pay for everything, both loss of goods and labour of producing them : this must curtail his means to nearly one-half what they were before : will he not in these circumstances try to drive a hard bargain with the farmer and keep up his rents by obstinacy and chicane in spite of

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the depreciation of value, and will not the farmer in his turn try to depress the poor and wring from the most dependent and needy class what has been imposed as a tax upon him by the most lordly and influential? Wherever there is power with a pretext of justice on its side, there will be the substance of injustice. What are the corn laws but legislative enactment to enable landlords to keep up the price of corn to their own advantage and the ruin of the country? The weakest, where any doubt arises, and this especially does arise when a new demand or a demand by a third party is made, proverbially goes to the wall. Suppose the tythes abolished—would this be no relief to the farmer or advantage to the labourer? So they say the taxes are not paid by the poor but by the rich; and this I grant is true on one supposition which is ever the corner-stone of this system, *viz.*, that the poor are necessarily and at all times so ground down that it is impossible without quite exterminating them to depress them lower. There is no more likely way than assuming it to be the case to prove it true in fact. By the tythes a new, unproductive, and wealthy class is introduced into society, and it is pretended that the whole burden of maintaining this class will be thrown upon the shoulders of that which was and is the wealthiest class besides, instead of being divided between all the classes of the community. As well might it be argued that a fat man shall get into a stage-coach already nearly full, and that only the large and robust passengers in the same vehicle will be incommoded by the addition. If he presses upon them, they will surely press upon their puny and weaker neighbours, and get what room they can out of them.

## PROJECT FOR A NEW THEORY OF CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LEGISLATION

WHEN I was about fourteen (as long ago as the year 1792), in consequence of a dispute, one day after coming out of meeting, between my father and an old lady of the congregation, respecting the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts and the limits of religious toleration, I set about forming in my head (the first time I ever attempted to think) the following system of political rights and general jurisprudence.

It was this circumstance that decided the fate of my future life; or rather, I would say it was from an original bias or craving to be satisfied of the reason of things, that I seized hold of this accidental opportunity to indulge in its uneasy and unconscious determination. Mr. Currie, my old tutor at Hackney, may still have the rough

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draught of this speculation, which I gave him with tears in my eyes, and which he good-naturedly accepted in lieu of the customary *themes*, and as a proof that I was no idler, but that my inability to produce a line on the ordinary school topics arose from my being involved in more difficult and abstruse matters. He must smile at the so oft-repeated charge against me of florid flippancy and tinsel. If from those briars I have since plucked roses, what labour has it not cost me? The Test and Corporation Acts were repealed the other day. How would my father have rejoiced if this had happened in his time, and in concert with his old friends Dr. Price, Dr. Priestley, and others! but now that there is no one to care about it, they give as a boon to indifference what they so long refused to justice, and thus ascribed by some to the liberality of the age! Spirit of contradiction! when wilt thou cease to rule over sublunary affairs, as the moon governs the tides? Not till the unexpected stroke of a comet throws up a new breed of men and animals from the bowels of the earth; nor then neither, since it is included in the very idea of all life, power, and motion. *For* and *against* are inseparable terms. But not to wander any farther from the point—

I began with trying to define what a *right* meant; and this I settled with myself was not simply that which is good or useful in itself, but that which is thought so by the individual, and which has the sanction of his will as such. 1. Because the determining what is good in itself is an endless question. 2. Because one person's having a right to any good, and another being made the judge of it, leaves him without any security for its being exercised to his advantage, whereas self-love is a natural guarantee for our self-interest. 3. A thing being willed is the most absolute moral reason for its existence: that a thing is good in itself is no reason whatever why it should exist, till the will clothes it with a power to act as a motive; and there is certainly nothing to prevent this will from taking effect (no law or admitted plea above it) but another will opposed to it, and which forms a right on the same principle. A good is only so far a right, inasmuch as it virtually determines the will; for a *right* meant that which contains within itself, and as respects the bosom in which it is lodged, a cogent and unanswerable reason why it should exist. Suppose I have a violent aversion to one thing and as strong an attachment to something else, and that there is no other being in the world but myself, shall I not have a self-evident right, full title, liberty, to pursue the one and avoid the other? That is to say, in other words, there can be no authority to interpose between the strong natural tendency of the will and its desired effect, but the will of another. It may be replied that reason, that affection, may interpose between

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the will and the act ; but there are motives that influence the conduct by first altering the will ; and the point at issue is, that these being away, what other principle or lever is there always left to appeal to, before we come to blows ? Now, such a principle is to be found in self-interest ; and such a barrier against the violent will is erected by the limits which this principle necessarily sets to itself in the claims of different individuals. Thus, then, a right is not that which is right in itself, or best for the whole, or even for the individual, but that which is good in his own eyes, and according to his own will ; and to which, among a number of equally selfish and self-willed beings, he can lay claim, allowing the same latitude and allowance to others. Political justice is that which assigns the limits of these individual rights in society, or it is the adjustment of force against force, of will against will, to prevent worse consequences. In the savage state there is nothing but an appeal to brute force, or the right of the strongest ; Politics lays down a rule to curb and measure out the wills of individuals in equal portions ; Morals has a higher standard still, and ought never to appeal to force in any case whatever. Hence I always found something wanting in Mr. Godwin's *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* (which I read soon after with great avidity, and hoped, from its title and its vast reputation, to get entire satisfaction from it), for he makes no distinction between political justice, which implies an appeal to force, and moral justice, which implies only an appeal to reason. It is surely a distinct question, what you can persuade people to do by argument and fair discussion, and what you may lawfully compel them to do, when reason and remonstrance fail. But in Mr. Godwin's system the 'omnipotence of reason' supersedes the use of law and government, merges the imperfection of the means in the grandeur of the end, and leaves but one class of ideas or motives, the highest and the least attainable possible. So promises and oaths are said to be of no more value than common breath ; nor would they, if every word we uttered was infallible and oracular, as if delivered from a Tripod. But this is pragmatism, and putting an imaginary for a real state of things. Again, right and duties, according to Mr. Godwin, are reciprocal. I could not comprehend this without an arbitrary definition that took away the meaning. In my sense, a man might have a right, a discriminating power, to do something, which others could not deprive him of, without a manifest infraction of certain rules laid down for the peace and order of society, but which it might be his duty to waive upon good reasons shown ; rights are seconded by force, duties are things of choice. This is the import of the words in common speech : why then pass over this distinction in a work confessedly rhetorical as well as logical, that is,

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which laid an equal stress on sound and sense? Right, therefore, has a personal or selfish reference, as it is founded on the law which determines a man's actions in regard to his own being and well-being; and political justice is that which assigns the limits of these individual rights on their compatibility or incompatibility with each other in society. Right, in a word, is the duty which each man owes to himself; or it is that portion of the general good of which (as being principally interested) he is made the special judge, and which is put under his immediate keeping.

The next question I asked myself was, what is law and the real and necessary ground of civil government? The answer to this is found in the former statement. *Law* is something to abridge, or, more properly speaking, to ascertain, the bounds of the original right, and to coerce the will of individuals in the community. Whence, then, has the community such a right? It can only arise in self-defence, or from the necessity of maintaining the equal rights of every one, and of opposing force to force in case of any violent and unwarrantable infringement of them. Society consists of a given number of individuals; and the aggregate right of government is only the consequence of these inherent rights, balancing and neutralising one another. How those who deny natural rights get at any sort of right, divine or human, I am at a loss to discover; for whatever exists in combination, exists beforehand in an elementary state. The world is composed of atoms, and a machine cannot be made without materials. First, then, it follows that law or government is not the mere creature of a social compact, since each person has a certain right which he is bound to defend against another without asking that other's leave, or else the right would always be at the mercy of whoever chose to invade it. There would be a right to do wrong, but none to resist it. Thus I have a natural right to defend my life against a murderer, without any mutual compact between us; hence society has an aggregate right of the same kind, and to make a law to that effect, forbidding and punishing murder. If there be no such immediate value and attachment to life felt by the individual, and a consequent justifiable determination to defend it, then the formal pretension of society to vindicate a right, which, according to this reasoning, has no existence in itself, must be founded on air, on a word, or a lawyer's *ipse dixit*. Secondly, society, or government, as such, has no right to trench upon the liberty or rights of the individuals its members, except as these last are, as it were, forfeited by interfering with and destroying one another, like opposite mechanical forces or quantities in arithmetic. Put the basis that each man's will is a sovereign law to itself: this can only hold in society as long as he



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does not meddle with others ; but as long as he does not do this, the first principle retains its force, for there is no other principle to impeach or overrule it. The will of society is not a sufficient plea ; since this is, or ought to be, made up of the wills or rights of the individuals composing it, which by the supposition remain entire, and consequently without power to act. The good of society is not a sufficient plea, for individuals are only bound (on compulsion) not to do it harm, or to be barely just : benevolence and virtue are voluntary qualities. For instance, if two persons are obliged to do all that is possible for the good of both, this must either be settled voluntarily between them, and then it is friendship, and not force ; or if this is not the case, it is plain that one must be the slave, and lie at the caprice and mercy of the other : it will be one will forcibly regulating two bodies. But if each is left master of his own person and actions, with only the implied proviso of not encroaching on those of the other, then both may continue free and independent, and contented in their several spheres. One individual has no right to interfere with the employment of my muscular powers, or to put violence on my person, to force me to contribute to the most laudable undertaking if I do not approve of it, any more than I have to force him to assist me in the direct contrary : if one has not, ten have not, nor a million, any such arbitrary right over me. What one can be *made* to do for a million is very trifling : what a million may do by being left free in all that merely concerns themselves, and not subject to the perpetual caprice and insolence of authority, and pretext of the public good, is a very different calculation. By giving up the principle of political independence, it is not the million that will govern the one, but the one that will in time give law to the million. There are some things that cannot be free in natural society, and against which there is a natural law ; for instance, no one can be allowed to knock out another's brains or to fetter his limbs with impunity. And government is bound to prevent the same violations of liberty and justice. The question is, whether it would not be possible for a government to exist, and for a system of laws to be framed, that confined itself to the punishment of such offences, and left all the rest (except the suppression of force by force) optional or matter of mutual compact. What are a man's natural rights ? Those, the infringement of which cannot on any supposition go unpunished : by leaving all but cases of necessity to choice and reason, much would be perhaps gained, and nothing lost.

**COROLLARY I.** It results from the foregoing statement, that there is nothing naturally to restrain or oppose the will of one man, but the will of another meeting it. Thus, in a desert island, it is evident

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that my will and rights would be absolute and unlimited, and I might say with Robinson Crusoe, 'I am monarch of all I survey.'

COROLLARY 2. It is coming into society that circumscribes my will and rights, by establishing equal and mutual rights, instead of the original uncircumscribed ones. They are still 'founded as the rock,' though not so broad and general as the casing air, for the only thing that limits them is the solidity of another right, no better than my own, and, like stones in a building, or a mosaic pavement, each remains not the less firmly riveted to its place, though it cannot encroach upon the next to it. I do not belong to the state, nor am I a nonentity in it, but I am one part of it, and independent in it, for that very reason that every one in it is independent of me. Equality, instead of being destroyed by society, results from and is improved by it; for in politics, as in physics, the action and reaction are the same: the right of resistance on their part implies the right of self-defence on mine. In a theatre, each person has a right to his own seat, by the supposition that he has no right to intrude into any one else's. They are convertible propositions. Away, then, with the notion that liberty and equality are inconsistent. But here is the artifice: by merging the rights and independence of the individual in the fictitious order of society, those rights become arbitrary, capricious, equivocal, removable at the pleasure of the state or ruling power; there is nothing substantial or durable implied in them: if each has no positive claim, naturally, those of all taken together can mount up to nothing; right and justice are mere blanks to be filled up with arbitrary will, and the people have thenceforward no defence against the government. On the other hand, suppose these rights to be not empty names or artificial arrangements, but original and inherent like solid atoms, then it is not in the power of government to annihilate one of them, whatever may be the confusion arising from their struggle for mastery, or before they can settle into order and harmony. Mr. Burke talks of the reflections and refractions of the rays of light as altering their primary essence and direction. But if there were no original rays of light, there could be neither refraction, nor reflections. Why, then, does he try by cloudy sophistry to blot the sun out of heaven? One body impinges against and impedes another in the fall, but it could not do this, but for the principle of gravity. The author of the *Sublime and Beautiful* would have a single atom outweigh the great globe itself; or an empty title, a bloated privilege, or a grievous wrong overturn the entire mass of truth and justice. The question between the author and his opponents appears to be simply this: whether politics, or the general good, is an affair of reason or imagination! and this seems decided by another consideration, *viz.*,

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that Imagination is the judge of individual things, and Reason of generals. Hence the great importance of the principle of universal suffrage; for if the vote and choice of a single individual goes for nothing, so, by parity of reasoning, may that of all the rest of the community: but if the choice of every man in the community is held sacred, then what must be the weight and value of the whole?

Many persons object that by this means property is not represented, and so, to avoid that, they would have nothing but property represented, at the same time that they pretend that if the elective franchise were thrown open to the poor, they would be wholly at the command of the rich, to the prejudice and exclusion of the middle and independent classes of society. Property always has a natural influence and authority; it is only people without property that have no natural protection, and require every artificial and legal one. *Those that have much, shall have none; and those that have little, shall have less.* This proverb is no less true in public than in private life. The *better orders* (as they are called, and who, in virtue of this title, would assume a monopoly in the direction of state affairs) are merely and in plain English those who are *better off* than others; and as they get the wished-for monopoly into their hands, others will be uniformly *worse off*, and will sink lower and lower in the scale; so that it is essentially requisite to extend the elective franchise in order to counteract the excess of the great and increasing goodness of the better orders to themselves. I see no reason to suppose that in any case popular feeling (if free course were given to it) would bear down public opinion. Literature is at present pretty nearly on the footing of universal suffrage, yet the public defer sufficiently to the critics; and when no party bias interferes, and the government do not make a point of running a writer down, the verdict is tolerably fair and just. I do not say that the result might not be equally satisfactory, when literature was patronised more immediately by the great; but then lords and ladies had no interest in praising a bad piece and condemning a good one. If they could have laid a tax on the town for not going to it, they would have run a bad play forty nights together, or the whole year round, without scruple. As things stand, the worse the law, the better for the lawmakers: it takes everything from others to give it to *them*. It is common to insist on universal suffrage and the ballot together. But if the first were allowed, the second would be unnecessary. The ballot is only useful as a screen from arbitrary power. There is nothing manly or independent to recommend it.

COROLLARY 3. If I was out at sea in a boat with a *jure divino* monarch, and he wanted to throw me overboard, I would not let him. No gentleman would ask such a thing, no freeman would submit to it.

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Has he, then, a right to dispose of the lives and liberties of thirty millions of men? Or have they more right than I have to resist his demands? They have thirty millions of times that right, if they had a particle of the same spirit that I have. It is not the individual, then, whom in this case I fear (to me 'there's no divinity doth hedge a king'), but thirty millions of his subjects that call me to account in his name, and who are of a most approved and indisputable loyalty, and who have both the right and power. The power rests with the multitude, but let them beware how the exercise of it turns against their own rights! It is not the idol but the worshippers that are to be dreaded, and who, by degrading one of their fellows, render themselves liable to be branded with the same indignities.

COROLLARY 4. No one can be born a slave; for my limbs are my own, and the power and the will to use them are anterior to all laws, and independent of the control of every other person. No one acquires a right over another but that other acquires some reciprocal right over him; therefore the relation of master and slave is a contradiction in political logic. Hence, also, it follows that combinations among labourers for the rise of wages are always just and lawful, as much as those among master manufacturers to keep them down. A man's labour is his own, at least as much as another's goods; and he may starve if he pleases, but he may refuse to work except on his own terms. The right of property is reducible to this simple principle, that one man has not a right to the produce of another's labour, but each man has a right to the benefit of his own exertions and the use of his natural and inalienable powers, unless for a supposed equivalent and by mutual consent. Personal liberty and property therefore rest upon the same foundation. I am glad to see that Mr. Macculloch, in his *Essay on Wages*, admits the right of combination among journeymen and others. I laboured this point hard, and, I think, satisfactorily, a good while ago, in my *Reply to Mr. Malthus*. 'Throw your bread upon the waters, and after many days you shall find it again.'

There are four things that a man may especially call his own. 1. His person. 2. His actions. 3. His property. 4. His opinions. Let us see how each of these claims unavoidably circumscribes and modifies those of others, on the principle of abstract equity and necessity and independence above laid down.

FIRST, AS TO THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS. My intention is to show that the right of society to make laws to coerce the will of others, is founded on the necessity of repelling the wanton encroachment of that will on their rights; that is, strictly on the right of self-defence or resistance to aggression. Society comes forward and says, 'Let us

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alone, and we will let you alone, otherwise we must see which is strongest ;' its object is not to patronise or advise individuals for their good, and against their will, but to protect itself : meddling with others forcibly on any other plea or for any other purpose is impertinence. But equal rights destroy one another ; nor can there be a right to impossible or impracticable things. Let A, B, C, D, &c., be different component parts of any society, each claiming to be the centre and master of a certain sphere of activity and self-determination : as long as each keeps within his own line of demarcation there is no harm done, nor any penalty incurred—it is only the superfluous and overbearing will of particular persons that must be restrained or lopped off by the axe of the law. Let A be the culprit ; B, C, D, &c., or the rest of the community, are plaintiffs against A, and wish to prevent his taking any unfair or unwarranted advantage over them. They set up no pretence to dictate or domineer over him, but merely to hinder his dictating to and domineering over them ; and in this, having both might and right on their side, they have no difficulty in putting it in execution. Every man's independence and discretionary power over what peculiarly and exclusively concerns himself, is his *castle* (whether round, square, or, according to Mr. Owen's new map of improvements, in the form of a parallelogram). As long as he keeps within this, he is safe—society has no hold of him : it is when he quits it to attack his neighbours that they resort to reprisals, and make short work of the interloper. It is, however, time to endeavour to point out in what this natural division of right, and separate advantage consists. In the first place, A, B, C, D have the common and natural rights of persons, in so far that none of these has a right to offer violence to, or cause bodily pain or injury to any of the others. Sophists laugh at natural rights : they might as well deny that we have natural persons ; for while the last distinction holds true and good by the constitution of things, certain consequences must and will follow from it—'while this machine is to us Hamlet,' &c. For instance, I should like to know whether Mr. Burke, with his *Sublime and Beautiful* fancies, would deny that each person has a particular body and senses belonging to him, so that he feels a peculiar and natural interest in whatever affects these more than another can, and whether such a peculiar and paramount interest does not imply a direct and unavoidable right in maintaining this circle of individuality inviolate. To argue otherwise is to assert that indifference, or that which does not feel either the good or the ill, is as capable a judge and zealous a discriminator of right and wrong as that which does. The right, then, is coeval and co-extended with the interest, not a product of convention, but inseparable from the order of the universe ; the

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doctrine itself is natural and solid; it is the contrary fallacy that is made of air and words. Mr. Burke, in such a question, was like a man out at sea in a haze, and could never tell the difference between land and clouds. If another break my arm by violence, this will not certainly give him additional health or strength; if he stun me by a blow or inflict torture on my limbs, it is I who feel the pain, and not he; and it is hard if I, who am the sufferer, am not allowed to be the judge. That another should pretend to deprive me of it, or pretend to judge for me, and set up his will against mine, in what concerns this portion of my existence—where I have all at stake and he nothing—is not merely injustice but impudence. The circle of personal security and right, then, is not an imaginary and arbitrary line fixed by law and the will of the prince, or the scaly finger of Mr. Hobbes's *Leviathan*, but is real and inherent in the nature of things, and itself the foundation of law and justice. 'Hands off is fair play'—according to the old adage. One, therefore, has not a right to lay violent hands on another, or to infringe on the sphere of his personal identity; one must not run foul of another, or he is liable to be repelled and punished for the offence. If you meet an Englishman suddenly in the street, he will run up against you sooner than get out of your way, which last he thinks a compromise of his dignity and a relinquishment of his purpose, though he expects you to get out of his. A Frenchman in the same circumstances will come up close to you, and try to walk over you, as if there was no one in his way; but if you take no notice of him, he will step on one side, and make you a low bow. The one is a fellow of stubborn will, the other a *petit maître*. An Englishman at a play mounts upon a bench, and refuses to get down at the request of another, who threatens to call him to account the next day. 'Yes,' is the answer of the first, 'if your master will let you!' His abuse of liberty, he thinks, is justified by the other's want of it. All an Englishman's ideas are modifications of his will; which shows, in one way, that right is founded on will, since the English are at once the freest and most wilful of all people. If you meet another on the ridge of a precipice, are you to throw each other down? Certainly not. You are to pass as well as you can. 'Give and take,' is the rule of natural right, where the right is not all on one side and cannot be claimed entire. Equal weights and scales produce a balance, as much as where the scales are empty: so it does not follow (as our votaries of absolute power would insinuate) that one man's right is nothing because another's is something. But suppose there is not time to pass, and one or other must perish, in the case just mentioned, then each must do the best for himself that he can, and the instinct of self-preservation prevails over everything else.

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In the streets of London, the passengers take the right hand of one another and the wall alternately; he who should not conform to this rule would be guilty of a breach of the peace. But if a house were falling, or a mad ox driven furiously by, the rule would be, of course, suspended, because the case would be out of the ordinary. Yet I think I can conceive, and have even known, persons capable of carrying the point of gallantry in political right to such a pitch as to refuse to take a precedence which did not belong to them in the most perilous circumstances, just as a soldier may waive a right to quit his post, and takes his turn in battle. The actual collision or case of personal assault and battery, is, then, clearly prohibited, inasmuch as each person's body is clearly defined: but how if A use other means of annoyance against B, such as a sword or poison, or resort to what causes other painful sensations besides tangible ones, for instance, certain disagreeable sounds and smells? Or, if these are included as a violation of personal rights, then how draw the line between them and the employing certain offensive words and gestures or uttering opinions which I disapprove? This is a puzzler for the dogmatic school; but they solve the whole difficulty by an assumption of *utility*, which is as much as to tell a person that the way to any place to which he asks a direction is 'to follow his nose.' We want to know by given marks and rules what is best and useful; and they assure us very wisely, that this is infallibly and clearly determined by what *is* best and useful. Let us try something else. It seems no less necessary to erect certain little *fortalices*, with palisades and outworks about them, for RIGHT to establish and maintain itself in, than as landmarks to guide us across the wide waste of UTILITY. If a person runs a sword through me, or administers poison, or procures it to be administered, the effect, the pain, disease or death is the same, and I have the same right to prevent it, on the principle that I am the sufferer; that the injury is offered to me, and he is no gainer by it, except for mere malice or caprice, and I therefore remain master and judge of my own remedy, as in the former case; the principle and definition of right being to secure to each individual the determination and protection of that portion of sensation in which he has the greatest, if not a sole interest, and, as it were, identity with it. Again, as to what are called *nuisances*, to wit offensive smells, sounds, &c., it is more difficult to determine on the ground that *one man's meat is another man's poison*. I remember a case occurred in the neighbourhood where I was, and at the time I was trying my best at this question, which puzzled me a good deal. A rector of a little town in Shropshire, who was at variance with all his parishioners, had conceived a particular spite to a lawyer who lived next door to him, and

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as a means of annoying him, used to get together all sorts of rubbish, weeds, and unsavoury materials, and set them on fire, so that the smoke should blow over into his neighbour's garden; whenever the wind set in that direction, he said, as a signal to his gardener, 'It's a fine Wicksteed wind to-day;' and the operation commenced. Was this an action of assault and battery, or not? I think it was, for this reason, that the offence was unequivocal, and that the only motive for the proceeding was the giving this offence. The assailant would not like to be served so himself. Mr. Bentham would say, the malice of the motive was a set-off to the injury. I shall leave that *prima philosophia* consideration out of the question. A man who knocks out another's brains with a bludgeon may say it pleases him to do so; but will it please him to have the compliment returned? If he still persists, in spite of this punishment, there is no preventing him; but if not, then it is a proof that he thinks the pleasure less than the pain to himself, and consequently to another in the scales of justice. The *lex talionis* is an excellent test. Suppose a third person (the physician of the place) had said, 'It is a fine Egerton wind to-day,' our rector would have been non-plussed; for he would have found that, as he suffered all the hardship, he had the right to complain of and to resist an action of another, the consequences of which affected principally himself. Now mark: if he had himself had any advantage to derive from the action, which he could not obtain in any other way, then he would feel that his neighbour also had the same plea and right to follow his own course (still this might be a doubtful point); but in the other case it would be sheer malice and wanton interference; that is, not the exercise of a right, but the invasion of another's comfort and independence. Has a person, then, a right to play on the horn or on a flute, on the same staircase? I say, yes; because it is for his own improvement and pleasure, and not to annoy another; and because, accordingly, every one in his own case would wish to reserve this or a similar privilege to himself. I do not think a person has a right to beat a drum under one's window, because this is altogether disagreeable, and if there is any extraordinary motive for it, then it is fit that the person should be put to some little inconvenience in removing his sphere of liberty of action to a reasonable distance. A tallow-chandler's shop or a steam-engine is a nuisance in a town, and ought to be removed into the suburbs; but they are to be tolerated where they are least inconvenient, because they are necessary somewhere, and there is no remedying the inconvenience. The right to protest against and to prohibit them rests with the suffering party; but because this point of the greatest interest is less clear in some cases than in others, it does not follow that there is no



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right or principle of justice in the case. 3. As to matters of contempt and the expression of opinion, I think these do not fall under the head of force, and are not, on that ground, subjects of coercion and law. For example, if a person inflicts a sensation upon me by material means, whether tangible or otherwise, I cannot help that sensation; I am so far the slave of that other, and have no means of resisting him but by force, which I would define to be material agency. But if another proposes an opinion to me, I am not bound to be of this opinion; my judgment and will is left free, and therefore I have no right to resort to force to recover a liberty which I have not lost. If I do this to prevent that other from pressing that opinion, it is I who invade his liberty, without warrant, because without necessity. It may be urged that material agency, or force, is used in the adoption of sounds or letters of the alphabet, which I cannot help seeing or hearing. But the injury is not here, but in the moral and artificial inference, which I am at liberty to admit or reject, according to the evidence. There is no force but argument in the case, and it is reason, not the will of another, that gives the law. Further, the opinion expressed, generally concerns not one individual, but the general interest; and of that my approbation or disapprobation is not a commensurate or the sole judge. I am judge of my own interests, because it is my affair, and no one's else; but by the same rule, I am not judge, nor have I a *veto* on that which appeals to all the world, merely because I have a prejudice or fancy against it. But suppose another expresses by signs or words a contempt for me? *Answer.* I do not know that he is bound to have a respect for me. Opinion is free; for if I wish him to have that respect, then he must be left free to judge for himself, and consequently to arrive at and to express the contrary opinion, or otherwise the verdict and testimony I aim at could not be obtained; just as players must consent to be hissed, if they expect to be applauded. Opinion cannot be forced, for it is not grounded on force, but on evidence and reason, and therefore these last are the proper instruments to control that opinion, and to make it favourable to what we wish, or hostile to what we disapprove. In what relates to action, the will of another is force, or the determining power: in what relates to opinion, the mere will or *ipse dixit* of another is of no avail but as it gains over other opinions to its side, and therefore neither needs nor admits of force as a counteracting means to be used against it. But in the case of calumny or indecency: 1. I would say that it is the suppression of truth that gives falsehood its worst edge. What transpires (however maliciously or secretly) in spite of the law, is taken for gospel, and as it is impossible to prevent calumny, so it is impossible to counteract it on the present

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system, or while every attempt to answer it is attributed to the people's not daring to speak the truth. If any single fact or accident peeps out, the whole character, having this legal screen before it, is supposed to be of a piece; and the world, defrauded of the means of coming to their own conclusion, naturally infer the worst. Hence the saying, that reputation once gone never returns. If, however, we grant the general license or liberty of the press, in a scheme where publicity is the great object, it seems a manifest *contre-sens* that the author should be the only thing screened or kept a secret: either, therefore, an anonymous libeller would be heard with contempt, or if he signed his name thus—, or thus — —, it would be equivalent to being branded publicly as a calumniator, or marked with the T. F. (*travail forcé*) or the broad R. (rogue) on his back. These are thought sufficient punishments, and yet they rest on opinion without stripes or labour. As to indecency, in proportion as it is flagrant is the shock and resentment against it; and as vanity is the source of indecency, so the universal discountenance and shame is its most effectual antidote. If it is public, it produces immediate reprisals from public opinion which no brow can stand; and if secret, it had better be left so. No one can then say it is obtruded on him; and if he will go in search of it, it seems odd he should call upon the law to frustrate the object of his pursuit. Further, at the worst, society has its remedy in its own hands whenever its moral sense is outraged, that is, it may send to Coventry, or excommunicate like the church of old; for though it may have no right to prosecute, it is not bound to protect or patronise, unless by voluntary consent of all parties concerned. Secondly, as to rights of action, or personal liberty. These have no limit but the rights of persons or property aforesaid, or to be hereafter named. They are the channels in which the others run without injury and without impediment, as a river within its banks. Every one has a right to use his natural powers in the way most agreeable to himself, and which he deems most conducive to his own advantage, provided he does not interfere with the corresponding rights and liberties of others. He has no right to coerce them by a decision of his individual will, and as long as he abstains from this he has no right to be coerced by an expression of the aggregate will, that is, by law. The law is the emanation of the aggregate will, and this will receives its warrant to act only from the forcible pressure from without, and its indispensable resistance to it. Let us see how this will operate to the pruning and curtailment of law. The rage of legislation is the first vice of society; it ends by limiting it to as few things as possible. 1. There can, according to the principle here imperfectly sketched, be no laws for the enforcement of morals; because morals have to do

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with the will and affections, and the law only puts a restraint on these. Every one is politically constituted the judge of what is best for himself; it is only when he encroaches on others that he can be called to account. He has no right to say to others, You shall do as I do; how then should they have a right to say to him, You shall do as we do? Mere numbers do not convey the right, for the law addresses not one, but the whole community. For example, there cannot rightly be a law to set a man in the stocks for getting drunk. It injures his health, you say. That is his concern, and not mine. But it is detrimental to his affairs; if so, he suffers most by it. But it is ruinous to his wife and family: he is their natural and legal guardian. But they are thrown upon the parish: the parish need not take the burden upon itself, unless it chooses or has agreed to do so. If a man is not kind to or fond of his wife I see no law to make him. If he beats her, or threatens her life, she as clearly has a right to call in the aid of a constable or justice of peace. I do not see, in like manner, how there can be law against gambling (against cheating there may), nor against usury. A man gives twenty, forty, a hundred per cent. with his eyes open, but would he do it if strong necessity did not impel him? Certainly no man would give double if he could get the same advantage for half. There are circumstances in which a rope to save me from drowning, or a draught of water, would be worth all I have. In like manner, lotteries are fair things; for the loss is inconsiderable, and the advantage may be incalculable. I do not believe the poor put into them, but the reduced rich, the *shabby-genteel*. Players were formerly prohibited as a nuisance, and fortune-tellers still are liable to the Vagrant Act, which the parson of the parish duly enforces, in his zeal to prevent cheating and imposture, while he himself has his two livings, and carries off a tenth of the produce of the soil. Rape is an offence clearly punishable by law; but I would not say that simple incontinence is so. I will give one more example, which, though quaint, may explain the distinction I aim at. A man may commit suicide if he pleases, without being responsible to any one. He may quit the world as he would quit the country where he was born. But if any person were to fling himself from the gallery into the pit of a playhouse, so as to endanger the lives of others, if he did not succeed in killing himself, he would render himself liable to punishment for the attempt, if it were to be supposed that a person so desperately situated would care about consequences. Duelling is lawful on the same principle, where every precaution is taken to show that the act is voluntary and fair on both sides. I might give other instances, but these will suffice. 2. There should be a perfect toleration in matters of religion. In what relates to the salvation of a man's

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soul, he is infinitely more concerned than I can be ; and to pretend to dictate to him in this particular is an infinite piece of impertinence and presumption. But if a man has no religion at all ? That does not hinder me from having any. If he stood at the church door and would not let me enter, I should have a right to push him aside ; but if he lets me pass by without interruption, I have no right to turn back and drag him in after me. He might as well force me to have no religion as I force him to have one, or burn me at a stake for believing what he does not. Opinion, 'like the wild goose, flies unclaimed of any man : ' heaven is like ' the marble air, accessible to all ; ' and therefore there is no occasion to trip up one another's heels on the road, or to erect a turnpike gate to collect large sums from the passengers. How have I a right to make another pay for the saving of my soul, or to assist me in damning his ? There should be no secular interference in sacred things ; no laws to suppress or establish any church or sect in religion, no religious persecutions, tests, or disqualifications ; the different sects should be left to inveigle and hate each other as much as they please ; but without the love of exclusive domination and spiritual power there would be little temptation to bigotry and intolerance.

3. AS TO THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY. It is of no use a man's being left to enjoy security, or to exercise his freedom of action, unless he has a right to appropriate certain other things necessary to his comfort and subsistence to his own use. In a state of nature, or rather of solitary independence, he has a right to all he can lay his hands on : what then limits this right ? Its being inconsistent with the same right in others. This strikes a mathematical or logical balance between two extreme and equal pretensions. As there is not a natural and indissoluble connection between the individual and his property, or those outward objects of which he may have need (they being detached, unlimited, and transferable), as there is between the individual and his person, either as an organ of sensation or action, it is necessary, in order to prevent endless debate and quarrels, to fix upon some other criterion or common ground of preference. Animals, or savages, have no idea of any other right than that of the strongest, and seize on all they can get by force, without any regard to justice or an equal claim. 1. One mode of settling the point is to divide the spoil. That is allowing an equal advantage to both. Thus boys, when they unexpectedly find anything, are accustomed to cry '*Halves!*' But this is liable to other difficulties, and applies only to the case of joint finding. 2. Priority of possession is a fair way of deciding the right of property ; first, on the mere principle of a lottery, or the old saying, '*First come, first served ;*' secondly, because the expectation having

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been excited, and the will more set upon it, this constitutes a powerful reason for not violently forcing it to let go its hold. The greater strength of volition is, we have seen, one foundation of right; for supposing a person to be absolutely indifferent to anything, he could properly set up no claim to it. 3. Labour, or the having produced a thing or fitted it for use by previous exertion, gives this right, chiefly, indeed, for moral and final causes; because if one enjoyed what another had produced, there would be nothing but idleness and rapacity; but also in the sense we are inquiring into, because on a merely selfish ground the labour undergone, or the time lost, is entitled to an equivalent, *cæteris manentibus*. 4. If another, voluntarily, or for a consideration, resigns to me his right in anything, it to all intents and purposes becomes mine. This accounts not only for gifts, the transfer of property by bargains, &c., but for legacies and the transmission of property in families or otherwise. It is hard to make a law to circumscribe this right of disposing of what we have as we please; yet the boasted law of primogeniture, which is professedly the bulwark and guardian of property is in direct violation of this principle. 5, and lastly. Where a thing is common, and there is enough for all, and no one contributes to it, as air or water, there can be no property in it. The proximity to a herring-fishery, or the having been the first to establish a particular traffic in such commodities, may perhaps give this right by aggravating our will, as having a nearer or longer power over them; but the rule is the other way. It is on same principle that poaching is a kind of honest thieving, for that which costs no trouble and is confined to no limits seems to belong to no one exclusively (why else do poachers or country people seize on this kind of property with the least reluctance, but that it is the least like stealing?); and as the game laws and the tenaciousness of the rights to that which has least the character of property, as most a point of honour, produced a revolution in one country, so they are not unlikely to produce it in another. The object and principle of the laws of property, then, is this: 1. To supply individuals and the community with what they need. 2. To secure an equal share to each individual, other circumstances being the same. 3. To keep the peace and promote industry and plenty, by proportioning each man's share to his own exertions, or to the good-will and discretion of others. The intention, then, being that no individual should rob another, or be starved but by his refusing to work (the earth and its produce being the natural estate of the community, subject to these regulations of individual right and public welfare), the question is, whether any individual can have a right to rob or starve the whole community: or if the necessary discretion left in the application of

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the principle has led to a state of things subversive of the principle itself, and destructive to the welfare and existence of the state, whether the end being defeated, the law does not fall to the ground, or require either a powerful corrective or a total reconstruction. The end is superior to the means, and the use of a thing does not justify its abuse. If a clock is quite out of order and always goes wrong, it is no argument to say it was set right at first and on true mechanical principles, and therefore it must go on as it has done, according to all the rules of art; on the contrary, it is taken to pieces, repaired, and the whole restored to the original state, or, if this is impossible, a new one is made. So society, when out of order, which it is whenever the interests of the many are regularly and outrageously sacrificed to those of the few, must be repaired, and either a reform or a revolution cleanse its corruptions and renew its elasticity. People talk of the poor laws as a grievance. Either they or a national bankruptcy, or a revolution, are necessary. The labouring population have not doubled in the last forty years; there are still no more than are necessary to do the work in husbandry, &c., that is indispensably required; but the wages of a labouring man are no higher than they were forty years ago, and the price of food and necessaries is at least double what it was then, owing to taxes, grants, monopolies, and immense fortunes gathered during the war by the richer or more prosperous classes, who have not ceased to propagate in the geometrical ratio, though the poor have not done it, and the maintaining of whose younger and increasing branches in becoming splendour and affluence presses with double weight on the poor and labouring classes. The greater part of a community ought not to be paupers or starving; and when a government by obstinacy and madness has reduced them to that state, it must either take wise and effectual measures to relieve them from it, or pay the forfeit of its own wickedness and folly.

It seems, then, that a system of just and useful laws may be constructed nearly, if not wholly, on the principle of the right of self-defence, or the security for person, liberty, and property. There are exceptions, such, for instance, as in the case of children, idiots, and insane persons. These common-sense dictates for a general principle can only hold good where the general conditions are complied with. There are also mixed cases, partaking of civil and moral justice. Is a man bound to support his children? Not in strict political right; but he may be compelled to forego all the benefits of civil society, if he does not fulfil an engagement which, according to the feelings and principles of that society, he has undertaken. So in respect to marriage. It is a voluntary contract, and the violation of it is punishable on the same plea of sympathy and custom.

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Government is not necessarily founded on common consent, but on the right which society has to defend itself against all aggression. But am I bound to pay or support the government for defending the society against any violence or injustice? No: but then they may withdraw the protection of the law from me if I refuse, and it is on this ground that the contributions of each individual to the maintenance of the state are demanded. Laws are, or ought to be, founded on the supposed infraction of individual rights. If these rights, and the best means of maintaining them, are always clear, and there could be no injustice or abuse of power on the part of the government, every government might be its own lawgiver: but as neither of these is the case, it is necessary to recur to the general voice for settling the boundaries of right and wrong, and even more for preventing the government, under pretence of the general peace and safety, from subjecting the whole liberties, rights and resources of the community to its own advantage and sole will.

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*'Player.* We have reformed that indifferently, my Lord.  
*Hamlet.* Oh! reform it altogether.'

THE Emancipation of the Jews is but a natural step in the progress of civilisation. Laws and institutions are positive things: opinions and sentiments are variable; and it is in conforming the stubbornness and perversity of the former to the freedom and boldness of the latter, that the harmony and beauty of the social order consist. But it is said, 'The Jews at present have few grievances to complain of; they are well off, and should be thankful for the indulgence they receive.' It is true, we no longer burn them at a stake, or plunder them of their goods: why then continue to insult and fix an idle stigma on them? At Rome a few years ago they made the Jews run races (naked) in the Corso on Good Friday. At present, they only oblige them to provide asses to run races on the same day for the amusement of the populace, and to keep up the spirit of the good old custom, though by altering it they confess that the custom was wrong, and that they are ashamed of it. They also shut up the Jews in a particular quarter of the city (called *Il Ghetto Judaico*), and at the same time will not suffer the English as heretics to be buried within the walls of Rome. An Englishman smiles or is scandalised at both these instances of bigotry; but if he is asked, 'Why, then, do you not yourselves emancipate the Catholics and the Jews?' he may answer, '*We have*

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emancipated the one.' And why not the other? 'Because we are intolerant.' This, and this alone, is the reason.

We throw in the teeth of the Jews that they are prone to certain sordid vices. If they are vicious it is we who have made them so. Shut out any class of people from the path to fair fame, and you reduce them to grovel in the pursuit of riches and the means to live. A man has long been in dread of insult for no just cause, and you complain that he grows reserved and suspicious. You treat him with obloquy and contempt, and wonder that he does not walk by you with an erect and open brow.

We also object to their trades and modes of life; that is, we shut people up in close confinement and complain that they do not live in the open air. The Jews barter and sell commodities, instead of raising or manufacturing them. But this is the necessary traditional consequence of their former persecution and pillage by all nations. They could not set up a trade when they were hunted every moment from place to place, and while they could count nothing their own but what they could carry with them. They could not devote themselves to the pursuit of agriculture, when they were not allowed to possess a foot of land. You tear people up by the roots and trample on them like noxious weeds, and then make an outcry that they do not take root in the soil like wholesome plants. You drive them like a pest from city to city, from kingdom to kingdom, and then call them vagabonds and aliens.

When reason fails, the Christian religion is, as usual, called in aid of persecution. The admission of the Jews, it is said, to any place of trust or emolument in the State ought not to be sanctioned, because they expect the coming of the Messiah, and their restoration, one day or other, to their own country: and Christianity, it is said, is part of the law of the land.

As to their exclusion because they expect the coming of the Messiah, and their restoration, one day or other, to their own country, a few words will be sufficient. Even if it is too much for a people, with this reversion in the promised land, to have a 'stake in the country' added to it; and the offer of a seat in the House of Commons is too much for any one who looks forward to a throne in the *New Jerusalem*: this objection comes with but an ill grace from the followers of him who has declared, 'My kingdom is not of this world;' and who on that plea profess to keep all the power and authority in their own hands. Suppose an attempt were made to exclude Christians from serving the office of constable, jury-man, or knight of the shire, as expressly contrary to the great principle of their religion, which inculcates an entire contempt for the things of



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this life, and a constant preparation for a better. Would not this be considered as an irony, and not a very civil one? Yet it is the precise counterpart of this argument. The restoration of the Jews to their own country, however firmly believed in as an article of faith, has been delayed eighteen hundred years, and may be delayed eighteen hundred more. Are they to remain indifferent to the good or evil, to the respectability or odium that may attach to them all this while? The world in general do not look so far; and the Jews have not been accused, more than others, of sacrificing the practical to the speculative. But according to this objection, there can be no amalgamation of interests with a people of such fantastic principles and abstracted ties; they cannot care how soon a country goes to ruin, which they are always on the point of quitting. Suppose a Jew to have amassed a large fortune in the last war, and to have laid by money in the funds, and built himself a handsome house in the neighbourhood of the metropolis; would he be more likely by his vote in the House of Commons to promote a revolution, so as to cause a general bankruptcy; or to encourage the mob to pull down his house, or root up his favourite walks, because after all, at the end of several centuries, he and the rest of his nation indulge in the prospect of returning to their own country? The most clear-sighted John Bull patriotism hardly reaches beyond ourselves and our heirs.

As to the assertion that Christianity is part of the law of the land, as Popery is a part of the law of the land at Rome, and a good reason for hunting Jews and refusing Christian burial to Protestants, by whom is it made? Not by our Divines. They do not distrust the power of our religion; and they will tell you that if Christianity, as sanctioning these cruelties or any miserable remnant of them, is part of the law of the land, then the law of the land is no part of Christianity. They do not forget the original character of the Jewish people, and will not say any thing against it. We and modern Europe derived from them the whole germ of our civilisation, our ideas on the unity of the Deity, or marriage, on morals,

‘And pure religion breathing household Laws.’

The great founder of the Christian religion was himself born among that people, and if the Jewish nation are still to be branded with his death, it might be asked on what principle of justice ought we to punish men for crimes committed by their co-religionists near two thousand years ago? That the Jews, as a people, persist in their blindness and obstinacy is to be lamented; but it is at least, under the circumstances, a proof of their sincerity; and as adherents to a losing cause, they are entitled to respect and not contempt. Is it the

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language of Lawyers? They are too intelligent, and, in the present times, not favourers of hypocrisy. They know that this law is not on our statute book, and if it were, that it would be law as long as it remained there and no longer; they know that the supposition originated in the unadvised dictum of a Judge, and, if it had been uttered by a Puritan Divine, it would have been quoted at this day as a specimen of puritanical nonsense and bigotry. Religion cannot take on itself the character of law without ceasing to be religion; nor can law recognise the obligations of religion for its principles, nor become the pretended guardian and protector of the faith, without degenerating into inquisitorial tyranny.

The proposal to admit Jews to a seat in Parliament in this country is treated as an irony or a burlesque on the Catholic question. At the same time, it is said to be very proper and rational in France and America, Denmark and the Netherlands, because there, though they are nominally admitted, court influence excludes them in the one, and popular opinion in the other, so that the law is of no avail: that is, in other words, in England as there is neither court-influence nor popular prejudice, and as every thing in this country is done by money alone, the Stock Exchange would soon buy up the House of Commons, and if a single Jew were admitted, the whole would shortly be a perfect Sanhedrim. This is a pleasant account of the spirit of English patriotism, and the texture of the House of Commons. All the wealth of the Jews cannot buy them a single seat there; but if a certain formal restriction were taken off, Jewish gold would buy up the fee simple of the consciences, prejudices and interests of the country, and turn the kingdom *topsy-turvy*. Thus the bedrid imagination of prejudice sees some dreadful catastrophe in every improvement, and no longer feeling the ground of custom under its feet, fancies itself on an abyss of ruin and lawless change. How truly has it been said of prejudice, 'that it has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind, and find only here and there a fitness of reception. But prejudice, like the spider, makes every where its home. It has neither taste nor choice of place, and all that it requires is room. There is scarcely a situation, except fire and water, in which a spider will not live. So let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking; let it be hot, cold, dark or light, lonely or inhabited, still prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live like the spider, where there seems nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the

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other does the same; and as several of our passions are strongly characterised by the animal world, prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind.'

Three hundred years ago all this was natural and in order, because it accorded with the prejudices of the time; now it is absurd and Gothic, because it is contrary to men's reason and feelings. Hatred is the food and growth of ignorance. While we know nothing but ourselves and our own notions, we can conceive of nothing else as possible; and every deviation from our practice or opinions gives a shock to our faith that nothing can expiate but blows. Those who differ from us in the smallest particular are considered as of a different species, and we treat them accordingly. But this barrier of prejudice, which is founded on ignorance, is thrown down by the diffusion of light and knowledge; nor can any thing build it up again. In the good old times a Jew was regarded by the vulgar and their betters as a sort of monster, a *lusus naturæ* whose existence they could not account for, and would not tolerate. The only way to get rid of the obnoxious opinion was to destroy the *man*. Besides, in those dark ages, they wanted some object of natural antipathy, as in country places they get a strange dog or an idiot to hunt down and be the bugbear of the village. But it is the test of reason and refinement to be able to subsist without bugbears. While it was supposed that 'the Jews eat little children,' it was proper to take precautions against them. But why keep up ill names and the ill odour of a prejudice when the prejudice has ceased to exist? It has long ceased amongst the reflecting part of the community; and, although the oldest prejudices are, it is to be lamented, preserved longest in the highest places, and governments have been slow to learn good manners, we cannot but be conscious that these errors are passing away. We begin to see, if we do not fully see, that we have no superiority to boast of but reason and philosophy, and that it is well to get rid of vulgar prejudices and nominal distinctions as fast as possible.

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THE view which has been taken of the subject by Beccaria and other modern writers appears to be erroneous or defective in some of the most important circumstances relating to this question.

*First objection.* It is assumed as a general maxim, that, 'it is not the intensity of punishment, but its duration, which makes the greatest impression on the human mind.'

This maxim will be found to be in direct opposition to all experi-

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ence, and to every principle of human nature. It supposes that a number of impressions, feeble in themselves, and dissipated over a long interval of time, produce a stronger effect upon the mind, than a single object, however powerful and striking, presented to it at once: that is, that the passions are excited more by reason than imagination, by the real, than by the apparent quantity of good or evil. This principle is indeed, in general, denied by Mr. Bentham, but admitted by him, as far as relates to the influence of the fear of death on malefactors. If it be true with respect to them in particular (which there is reason to doubt,) it is not because the fear of a continued punishment influences them more than the fear of an intense one, but because death is to them not an intense punishment.

Again, it has been said, that 'crimes are more effectually prevented by the certainty than by the severity of the punishment.' Now I cannot think that this is either self-evident, or true universally and in the abstract. It is not true of human nature in general, and it is still less so as applied to the more lawless and abandoned classes of the community. It is evident from the very character of such persons, that if they are not to be acted upon by violent motives, by what appeals strongly to their imagination and their passions, they cannot be acted upon at all, they are out of the reach of all moral discipline. The dull, sober certainties of common life, and the real consequences of things when set in competition with any favourite inclination, or vicious indulgence, they altogether despise. It is only when the certainty of punishment is immediate, obvious, and connected with circumstances which strike upon the imagination, that it operates effectually in the prevention of crimes. This principle is however true, as it has been sometimes applied to cases where the law has become a dead letter. *When a moderate punishment is strictly and vigorously enforced, and a severe punishment is as generally and systematically evaded, the mind will, undoubtedly, be more affected by what it considers as a serious reality, than by what it will regard as an idle threat.* So far the principle is true in its application, but no farther.

*First maxim.* It is not the *real*, but the apparent severity of the punishment which most effectually deters from the commission of crimes. For this reason, an intense punishment will have more effect than a continued one, because more easily apprehended. Neither is the certainty of punishment to be depended on, except when it is apparent. *It is not the calculation of consequences, but their involuntary and irresistible impression on the mind that produces action. The laws to prevent crimes must appeal to the passions of men, and not to their reason: for crimes proceed from passion, and not from reason. If men were governed by reason, laws would be unnecessary.*

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*Second objection.* It seems to be taken for granted by speculative writers, (at least the contrary is not stated with sufficient distinctness) that punishment operates by terror alone, or by the fear which each individual has of the consequences to himself.

It is indeed a prevailing maxim of philosophy, that self-interest is the sole spring of action, and it has thus probably been inferred, that the fear of punishment could only operate on this principle of cool, calculating self-interest. But it is quite certain that sympathy with others, whatever may be its origin, is, practically speaking, an independent and powerful principle of action. The opinions and feelings of others do actually and constantly influence our conduct, in opposition to our strongest interests and inclinations. That punishment, therefore, will not be the most dreaded, nor, consequently, the most effectual, which is the greatest to the individual, unless it is at the same time thought so by others, and expresses the greatest general disapprobation of the crime. Thus, though a malefactor, consulting only his own inclinations or feelings, might prefer death to perpetual imprisonment and hard labour, yet he may regard it as the worst of punishments, in as far as it demonstrates the greatest abhorrence and indignation in the community against the crime.

*Second maxim.* Punishment operates by sympathy, as well as by terror. Penal laws have a tendency to repress crimes not more by exciting a dread of the consequences, than by marking the strong sense entertained by others of their enormity, and the detestation in which they are held by mankind in general. The most severe laws will always be the most effectual, as long as they are expressions of the public sentiment; but they will become ineffectual, in proportion as the sentiment is wanting. The disproportion between the crime and the punishment in the public opinion, will then counteract the dread of the severity of the law. Setting this feeling aside, the most severe laws will be the most effectual. The argument drawn from the inefficacy of severe punishments, when inflicted on trifling or common offences, does not prove that they must be ineffectual, when applied to great crimes, which rouse the public indignation and justify the severity.

*Third objection.* It is farther implied in the foregoing statements, that the only object of punishment is to prevent actual crimes, or that those laws are the best, which most effectually answer this end by deterring criminals.

This I also conceive to be a narrow and imperfect view of the question, which respects not merely the motives and conduct of criminals, but the motives and sentiments of the community at large. It is of the first importance that the ill disposed should be coerced,

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but it is also of importance that they should be coerced in such a manner, and by such means, as it is most consistent with the public morals to employ. In defending the state, we are not to forget that the state ought to be worth defending. As the sentiments of society have a powerful effect in enforcing the laws, so the laws re-act powerfully on the sentiments of society. This is evident with respect to barbarous punishments. The evil of a law operating in this way on manners, by holding out an example of cruelty and injustice, however effectual it might be found, is not denied. In like manner, a law falling short of or disappointing the just indignation and moral sense of the community, is, for the same reason, faulty as one that exceeds and outrages it. One end of punishment, therefore, is to satisfy this natural sense of justice in the public mind, and to strengthen the opinion of the community by its act. As the arm of justice ought not to be mocked and baffled by the impunity of offences, so neither ought it to be unnerved by thwarting and prevaricating with the common sentiments of mankind, or by substituting remote, indirect, and artificial punishments for obvious and direct ones. I call a punishment natural when it is dictated by the *passion* excited against the crime. A punishment will therefore be the most beneficial when it arises out of, and co-operates with that strong sense of right or wrong, that firm and healthy tone of public sentiment, which is the best preservative against crime.

*Illustration.* Thus even if it were shewn that perpetual imprisonment and hard labour would be equally effectual in deterring malefactors from the commission of murder, it would by no means necessarily follow, that this mode of punishment would be preferable to capital punishment, unless it could at the same time be made to appear that it would equally enforce the principle of the connexion between the crime and the punishment, or the rule of natural justice, by which he who shews himself indifferent to the life of another, forfeits his own. There is a natural and home-felt connexion between the hardened obduracy which has shewn itself insensible to the cries of another for mercy and the immediate burst of indignation which dooms the criminal to feel that he has no claims on the pity of others: but there is no connexion, because there is no ascertainable proportion, in the mind either of the criminal or the public, between the original crime, and the additional half-hour in the day after the lapse of twenty years, which the malefactor is condemned to labour, or the lash of the whip which urges him to complete his heavy task. That reasoning which stops the torrent of public indignation, and diverts it from its object only to dole it out to its miserable victim, drop by drop, and day by day, through a long protracted series of

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time with systematic, deliberate, unrelenting severity, is in fact neither wise nor humane. Punishments of this kind may be so contrived as to intimidate the worst part of mankind, but they will also be the aversion of the best, and will confound and warp the plain distinctions between right and wrong.

*Third maxim.* The end of punishment is not only to prevent actual crimes, but to form a standard of public opinion, and to confirm and sanction the moral sentiments of the community. The mode and degree of the punishment ought, therefore, to be determined with a view to this object, as well as with a view to the regulation of the police.

*Fourth objection.* The theory here alluded to, is farther objectionable in this, that it makes familiarity with the punishment essential to its efficacy, and therefore recommends those punishments, the example of which is the most lasting, and, as it were, constantly before the eyes of the public, as the most salutary. On the contrary, those punishments are the best which require the least previous familiarity with objects of guilt and misery to make them formidable, which come least into contact with the mind, which tell at a distance, the bare mention of which startles the ear, which operate by an imaginary instead of an habitual dread, and which produce their effect once for all, without destroying the erectness and elasticity of social feeling by the constant spectacle of the degradation of the species. No one would wish to have a gibbet placed before his door, to deter his neighbours from robbing him. Punishments which require repeated ocular inspection of the evils which they occasion, cannot answer their end in deterring individuals, without having first operated as a penance on society. They are a public benefit only so far as they are a public nuisance. Laws framed entirely on this principle, would convert the world into a large prison, and divide mankind into two classes, felons, and their keepers!

*Maxim fourth.* Those punishments are the best which produce the strongest apprehension, with the least actual suffering or contemplation of evil. Such is in general the effect of those punishments which appeal to the imagination, rather than to our physical experience; which are immediately connected with a principle of honour, with the passions in general, with natural antipathies, the fear of pains, the fear of death, &c. These punishments are, in Mr. Bentham's phrase, the most *economical*; they do their work with the least expense of individual suffering, or abuse of public sympathy. Private punishments are, so far, preferable to public ones.

*General inference.* There ought to be a gradation of punishments proportioned to the offence, and adapted to the state of society.

## PERSONAL POLITICS

In order to strike the imagination and excite terror, severe punishments ought not to be common.<sup>1</sup>

To be effectual, from the sympathy of mankind in the justice of the sentence, the highest punishments ought not to be assigned to the lowest or to very different degrees of guilt. The absence of the sanction of public opinion not only deadens the execution of the law, but by giving confidence to the offender, produces that sort of resistance to it, which is always made to oppression. The ignominy attached to the sentence of the law, is thus converted into pity. If the law is enacted but not enforced, this must either be to such a degree as to take away the terror of the law, or if the terror still remains, it will be a terror of injustice, which will necessarily impair the sense of right and wrong in the community. But if the law is regularly carried into execution, the effect will be still worse. In general, all laws are bad which are not seconded by the manners of the people, and laws are not in conformity with the manners of the people when they are not executed. This is the case at present with a great proportion of the English laws. Is it to be wondered at that they should be so? Manners have changed, and will always change insensibly, and irresistibly, from the force of circumstances. The laws, as things of positive institution, remain the same. So that without a constant, gradual assimilation of the laws to the manners, the manners will, in time, necessarily become at variance with the laws, and will render them odious, ineffectual, and mischievous—a clog, instead of a furtherance to the wheels of justice.

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‘Ay, every inch a king!’

MANY persons are surprised at the conduct of Charles x. in pushing things to extremities: the wonder would have been, if he had not. All the time of the *Restoration* under a charter, he was employed in thinking how to get rid of that charter, to throw off that incubus, to cancel that juggle, to breathe once more the air of divine right. Till this were done—no matter by what delays, after what length of time, by what jesuitical professions, by what false oaths, by what stratagems, by what unmasked insolence, by what loud menaces, by what violence, by what blood—the French monarch (whether Charles or Louis), felt himself ‘cooped, confined, and cabined in, by saucy doubts and

<sup>1</sup> ‘In Scotland, at an execution, all appear melancholy, many shed tears, and some faint away. But executions there are very rare.’—*Burgh*.



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fears ;' but this phantom of a constitution once out of the way he would be 'himself again.' He would then first cry *Vive la Charte !* without a pang—with his eyes running over, and his heart bursting with laughter. If he had a right to be *where* he was, he had a right to be *what* he was, and what he was born to be. This was the first idea instilled into his mind, the last he would forget. All else was a compromise with circumstances, a base surrender of an inalienable claim, a concession extorted under *duress*, so much the more eagerly to be retracted, as an appearance of compliance had been the longer and more studiously kept up. A throne not founded on inherent right was a mockery and insult. All power shared with the people, supposed to be derived from them, for which the possessor was accountable to them, held during pleasure or good behaviour, was pollution to his thoughts, odious to him as the leprosy. Be sure of this, popular right coiled round the sceptre of hereditary kings is like the viper clinging to our hands, which we shake off with fear and loathing. There is in despots (born and bred) a natural and irreconcilable antipathy to the people, and to all obligations to them. The very name of freedom is a screech-owl in their ears. They have been brought up with the idea that they were entitled to absolute power, that there was something in their blood that gave them a right to it without condition or reserve, or being called to account for the use or abuse of it ; and they reject with scorn and impatience anything short of this. They will either be absolute or they will be nothing. The Bourbons for centuries had been regarded as the gods of the earth, as a superior race of beings, who had a sovereign right to trample on mankind, and crush them in their wrath or spare them in their mercy. Would Charles x. derogate from his ancestors, would he be the degenerate scion of that royal line, to wear a tarnished and dishonoured crown, to be raised by the shout of a mob, to wait the assent of a Chamber of Deputies, to owe every thing to the people, to be a king on liking and on sufferance, a sort of state prisoner in his own kingdom, shut up and spell-bound in the nick-name of a Constitution ? He would as soon consent to go on all-fours. The latter would not shock his pride and prejudices more : would not be a greater degradation in his eyes, or a more total inversion of the order of nature. It is not that the successor to a despotic throne will not, but he cannot be the king of a free people : the very supposition is in his mind a contradiction in terms. It is something base and mechanical, not amounting even to the rank of a private gentleman who does what he pleases with his estate ; and kings consider mankind as their estate. If a herd of overloaded asses were to turn against their drivers and demand their liberty and better usage, these could not be more astonished

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than the Bourbons were when the French people turned against them and demanded their rights. Will these same Bourbons, who have been rocked and cradled in the notion of arbitrary power, and of their own exclusive privileges as a separate and sacred race, who have sucked it in with their mothers' milk, who inherit it in their blood, who have nursed it in exile and in solitude, and gloated over it once more, since their return, as within their reach, ever be brought to look Liberty in the face except as a mortal and implacable foe, or ever give up the hope of removing that obstacle to all that they have been or still have a fancied right to be? The last thing that they can be convinced of will be to make them comprehend that they are *men*. This is a discovery of the last forty years, that has been forced upon them in no very agreeable manner; by the beheading of more than one of their race, the banishment of the rest, by their long wanderings and unwelcome return to their own country, from whence they have been driven twice since—but up to that period they find no such levelling doctrine inscribed either in the records of history or on their crest and coat of arms or in the forms of religion or in the ancient laws and institutions of the kingdom. Which version will they then believe or turn a deaf ear to: that which represents them as God's vicegerents upon earth, or that which holds them up as the enemies of the human race and the scoff and outcasts of their country? Every, the meanest individual has a standard of estimation in his own breast, which is that he is of more importance than all the rest of the world put together; but a king is the only person with respect to whom all the rest of the world join or have ever joined in the same conclusion; and be assured that having encouraged him in this opinion, he will do every thing in his power to keep them to it till his last gasp. You have sworn to a man that he is a god: this is indeed the most solemn of compacts. Any attempt to infringe it, any breath throwing a doubt upon it, is treason, rebellion, impiety. Would you be so unjust as to retract the boon, he will not be so unjust to himself as to let you. He would sooner suffer ten deaths and forfeit twenty kingdoms than patiently submit to the indignity of having his right called in question. It is said, Charles x. is a good-natured man: it may be so, and that he would not hurt a fly; but in that quarrel he would shed the blood of millions of men. If he did not do so, he would consider himself as dead to honour, a recreant to fame, and a traitor to the cause of kings. Touch but that string, the inborn dignity of kings and their title to 'solely sovereign sway and masterdom,' and the milk of human kindness in the best-natured monarch turns to gall and bitterness. You might as well present a naked sword to his breast, as be guilty of a word or look that can bear any other construction than

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that of implicit homage and obedience. There is a spark of pride lurking at the bottom of his heart, however glozed over by smiles and fair speeches, ever ready (with the smallest opposition to his will) to kindle into a flame, and desolate kingdoms. Let but the voice of freedom speak, and to resist 'shall be in him remorse, what bloody work soever' be the consequence. Good-natured kings, like good-natured men, are often merely lovers of their own ease who give themselves no trouble about other people's affairs: but interfere in the slightest point with their convenience, interest, or self-love, and a tigress is not more furious in defence of her young. While the Royal Guards were massacring the citizens of Paris, Charles x. was partridge-shooting at St. Cloud, to show that the shooting of his subjects and the shooting of game were equally among the *menus plaisirs* of royalty. This is what is meant by mild paternal sway, by the perfection of a good-natured monarch, when he orders the destruction of as great a number of people as will not do what he pleases, without any discomposure of dress or features. Away with such trifling! There is no end of the confusion and mischief occasioned by the application of this mode of arguing from personal character and appearances to public measures and principles. If we are to believe the fashionable cant on this subject, a man cannot do a dirty action because he wears a clean shirt: he cannot break an oath to a nation, because he pays a gambling debt; and because he is delighted with the universal homage that is paid him, with having every luxury and every pomp at his disposal, he cannot, under the mask of courtesy and good humour, conceal designs against a Constitution, or 'smile and smile and be a tyrant!' Such is the logic of the *Times*. This paper, 'ever strong upon the stronger side,' laughs to scorn the very idea entertained by our 'restless and mercurial neighbours' (as if the *Times* had nothing of the *tourniquet* principle in its composition) that so amiable, so well-meaning and prosperous a gentleman as Charles x. should nourish an old and inveterate grudge against the liberties of his country or wish to overturn that happy order of things which the *Times* had so great a share in establishing. But he no sooner verifies the predictions of the French journalists and is tumbled from his throne, than the *Times* with its jolly, swaggering, *thrasonical* air falls upon him and calls him all the *vagabonds* it can get its tongue to. We do not see the wit of this, any more than of its assuring us, with unabated confidence, that there is not the least shadow of foundation for the apprehensions of those who are perverse enough to think, that a Ministry that have set up and countenanced the Continental despotisms, and uniformly shown themselves worse than indifferent to the blood and groans of thousands of victims in foreign countries (sacrificed under their guar-

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antee of the *deliverance of mankind*) may have an *arrière-pensée* against the liberties of their own. We grant the premises of the *Times* in either case, that the French king was good-humoured and that the Duke has a vacant face ; but these favourable appearances have not prevented a violent catastrophe in the one case and may not in the other. Mr. Brougham a short time ago, in a speech at a public meeting, gave his hearty approbation of the late Revolution in France, and clenched his argument by asking what fate an English monarch would merit, and probably meet, who acted in the same manner as the besotted Charles ; who annulled the liberty of the press, who prevented the meeting of the representatives of the people, who disfranchised four-fifths of the electors by an arbitrary decree, and proposed to reign without law, and raise the taxes without a Parliament ? This is not exactly the point at issue. A more *home* question would be, what fate a king of England would deserve, not who did or attempted all this in his own person, but who fearing to do that, as the next best thing and to show which way his inclinations tended, aided and abetted with all the might and resources of a people calling itself free, and tried to force back upon a neighbouring state, by a long and cruel war and with the ruin of his own subjects, a king like Charles x., who by every act and circumstance of his life had shown himself hostile to the welfare and freedom of his country, and whose conduct, if repeated here, would justly incur the forfeiture of his own crown ? It would be ' premature,' in the judgment of some, to give an opinion on this subject till after the thing has happened, and then it would be neither loyal nor patriotic to condemn the conduct of our own cabinet ; but we hope at least that the next time the English government undertake to force a king upon the French people, they will send them a baboon instead of a Bourbon, as the less insult of the two !—To return to the question of *personal politics*. Our last king but one was a good domestic character ; but this had little or nothing to do with the wisdom or folly of his public measures. He might be faithful to his conjugal vows, but might put a construction on some clause in his Coronation-oath fatal to the peace and happiness of a large part of his subjects. He might be an exceedingly well-meaning, moral man, but might have notions instilled into him in early youth respecting the prerogatives of the crown and the relation between the sovereign and the people, that might not quit him to his latest breath, and might embroil his subjects and the world in disastrous wars and controversies during his whole reign. His son succeeded him without the same reputation for domestic virtue, but adopted all the measures of his father's ministers. If the private character and the public conduct were to be submitted to the same test, this could not have hap-

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pened. But the late king was cried up for his elegant accomplishments, and as the *fine gentleman* of his family; and this, with equally sound logic, atoned for the absence of less shewy qualities, and stamped his public proceedings with the character of a wise and liberal policy. We are already assured of a fortunate and peaceful reign, because the present king looks pleased and good-humoured on his accession to the crown; though the smallest cloud in the political horizon may scatter the ruddy smiles and overcast the whole prospect. Mr. Coleridge complains, somewhere, of politicians who pretend to guide the state, and yet have ruined their own affairs. Would the author of the *Ancient Mariner* apply the same rule to other things, and affirm that no one could be a poet or a philosopher who had not made his fortune? One would suppose, that all the people of sense and worth were confessedly on one side of the question in the great disputes in religion or politics that have agitated and torn the world in pieces, and all the knaves and fools on the other. This is hardly tenable ground. Charles ix., of happy memory, was we believe a good-tempered man and a most religious prince: this did not hinder him from authorising the massacre of St. Bartholomew and shooting at the Huguenots out of the palace-windows with his own hands. This was the prejudice of his time: we have still certain prejudices to contend with in ours, which have nothing to do with the looks, temper, or private character of those who hold them. We wonder at the cruelties and atrocities of religious fanatics in former times, and would not have them repeated: were none of these persecutors honest, conscientious men? Take any twelve inquisitors: six of them shall be angels and the other six scoundrels, yet they will all agree in one unanimous verdict, condemning you or me to the flames for not believing in the infallibility of the Pope. This is the thing to be avoided by *all means*; and not to lose our time in idle discussions about the amiableness of the characters of these pious exterminators, nor in admiring the fineness of their countenances, nor the picturesque effect of the scenery and *costume*. Charles x., the gay and gallant Count d'Artois, wears a hair-shirt, is fond of partridge-shooting, and wanted to put a yoke on the necks of his subjects. The last is that on which issue was joined. Let him go where he chooses, with a handsome pension; but let him not be sent back again (as he was once before) at the expense of millions of lives! <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Even then I should not despair. The Revolution of the Three Days was like a resurrection from the dead, and showed plainly that liberty too has a spirit of life in it; and that the hatred of oppression is 'the unquenchable flame, the worm that dies not.'

## NOTES



## NOTES

### LITERARY CRITICISM

Hazlitt, as the reader of the essay 'On Reading New Books' might expect, was not much given to the task of 'reviewing.' His principal work of the kind was done for *The Edinburgh Review*, for which see vol. xvi. His formal literary criticism for other journals is brought together in the present section. His informal opinions of contemporaneously published books are, of course, to be found scattered throughout his writings.

### MME. DE STAËL'S NEW WORK

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings: Second Series*.

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5. *This very able production. De l'Allemagne.* Par Mme. la Baronne de Staël-Holstein. Paris, H. Nicolle, A la librairie stéréotype, 1810. Ré-imprimé par John Murray, Albemarle St., Londres, 1813. When brought out in Paris the book gave offence to Napoleon's censorship, and the edition was confiscated. Murray republished it through the intervention of Crabb Robinson, and also brought out an edition in English, which is not that here reviewed. The quoted passages are therefore presumably of Hazlitt's translation.
7. *One without parallel.* Act iv. Scene 5. Cf. 'On the German Drama' in *Lectures on the Age of Elizabeth* (vol. vi. p. 363).
8. *A drama of this kind. Die Natürliche Tochter* (1803).  
'By a singular vicissitude in taste,' etc. Hazlitt quotes this passage in his *Edinburgh Review* article, 'Schlegel on the Drama' (vol. xvi. pp. 98-9).  
*A studied suppression of imagination and natural passion.* Cf. vol. xvi. p. 58 and note.
9. *The pedantic lover in The Inconstant.* Captain Duretete. See Act II. Scene 2.  
*She writes like a Frenchwoman.* Her father was, of course, the eminent financier Necker (1732-1804); her mother, the daughter of a Swiss pastor and the early love of Gibbon.

### CHARACTER OF MR. WORDSWORTH'S NEW POEM, THE EXCURSION

Reprinted by Hazlitt, with omissions and variations, in *The Round Table* (see vol. iv. pp. 111-25 and notes). In view of the interest of the subject the complete articles, as they appeared in *The Examiner*, are reprinted here. The first two articles were unsigned, the signature 'W. H.' occurring at the end of the third article. Cf. *A Reply to 'Z.'* (vol. ix. p. 6 and note).



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9. 'Have proved a monument.' See the dedicatory sonnet to Lord Lonsdale.
10. Note. Hazlitt's reference is to what *The Examiner* calls the 'regal raree-show' in the Parks at the beginning of August 1814, as part of the victory celebrations.
11. Note. *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, Book 1. chap. ii., from memory (*Works*, ed. Keynes, II. 20).
14. Note. 'But, poor gentleman! it often goes hard with him, for he's a wit.' Wycherley, *Love in a Wood*, Act III. Scene 1.
19. 'The great vision of the guarded mount.' *Lycidas*, 161.
- 'The meanest flower,' etc. Wordsworth's Ode, *Intimations of Immortality*, 206-7.
20. 'How gay the habitations,' etc. *Excursion*, v. 411-39.

## CHARLEMAGNE: OU L'ÉGLISE DÉLIVRÉE

Signed 'W. H.' First reprinted by Waller and Glover.

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25. *The brother of Buonaparte*. Lucien Buonaparte (1775-1840), Prince of Canino, who, following his capture at sea on the way to America in 1810, resided at Thorngrove, Worcestershire, until the peace of 1814. For later references by Hazlitt to his epic poem see *Notes of a Journey* (vol. x. p. 254) and *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIII. p. 182).
- That his brother was*. Hazlitt is pardonably assuming, with the rest of the world, that Napoleon's career was finished with the Elba phase.
26. *Henriade*. Voltaire's epic (1732).
27. *Titian's St. Peter Martyr*. Cf. vol. x. pp. 271-2.
29. *Quevedo*. Cf. vol. ix. p. 35 and note.
30. *The true Florimel*. *The Faerie Queene*, Book III., Canto viii.
31. *Another epic poem*. *La Cirneide*, published 1819.

## MR. COLERIDGE'S CHRISTABEL

'Literary Notices, No. 1,' unsigned. This feature was Hazlitt's, and of the first twenty-nine papers all except one (the twelfth, by Leigh Hunt) are his work. He regarded it frankly as an extension of his political platform, and the present is his only review of a non-political subject.

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33. *The manuscript runs thus, or nearly thus*. Hazlitt is probably quoting from memory the 253rd line—

'Are lean and old and foul of hue,'

which, occurring in several early transcripts which survive, was omitted by Coleridge on printing the poem. See E. H. Coleridge, *Christabel*, 1907. A MS. copy of the poem in Hazlitt's wife's hand (which does not appear to have survived) was used by him as a notebook during his Parliamentary reporting, and presented to his colleague of the Press Gallery, John Payne Collier. See the latter's *Seven Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton* by S. T. Coleridge, 1856, pp. xxxix-xliii, and W. C. Hazlitt, *Memoirs*, 1867, I. 195.

'It is the keystone,' etc. Ben Jonson, *Underwoods*, xxx., 'An Epistle to Sir Edward Sackville.'

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33. l. 26. Misprinted 'a greater physiological curiosity' in the newspaper. Hazlitt's reference, of course, is to Coleridge's note on *Kubla Khan* in which he said that the poem was published 'rather as a psychological curiosity, than on the ground of any supposed poetic merits.'
- 'Busied about some wicked gin.' *The Faerie Queene*, III. vii. 7.

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

Unsigned. First reprinted by Waller and Glover.

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35. 'I do perceive a fury,' etc. Cf.

‘I do understand a fury in your words,  
But not the words.’

*Oibello*, IV. 2. 32-3.

- 'And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,' etc. 1 Henry IV., 1. 3. 42-5.  
'The very age,' etc. Hamlet, III. 2. 27.  
'An understanding,' etc. Cf. *ibid.*, 1. 2. 26.  
'They are begot,' etc. Cf. 'Begot upon itself, born on itself.' Othello, III. 4. 162.
36. 'He has tasted,' etc. See vol. IX., note to p. 122.  
This will never do. See vol. VII., note to p. 361.  
'The man whose eye,' etc. Wordsworth, 'Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree,' 55-9.  
Hogarth's famous print. Frontispiece to Joshua Kirby's edition of Dr. Brook Taylor's *Method of Perspective* (1753).  
Mr. Hobbouse . . . 'Historical Illustrations.' Cf. vol. XII. p. 379 and note.
37. 'As 'twere in spite of scorn.' Cf. *Paradise Lost*, 1. 619.  
'The child and champion,' etc. See vol. XIII., note to p. ix.  
'The High Legitimates, the Holy Band.' Unidentified.  
Sings or says. See vol. V., note to p. 371.  
Born so bigb. Unacknowledged from *Richard III.*, 1. 3. 263.  
'I lovd ber,' etc. Stanzas 18 and 19.
38. *The Critics of the Cockney School of Poetry.* Blackwood's attack on Leigh Hunt under this heading having opened in the preceding November.  
'I stood in Venice.' Stanzas 1-3.  
'There is a tomb,' etc. Stanzas 30-3.
39. 'Ferrara!' etc. Stanzas 35-8.
40. 'The statue,' etc. Thomson, *The Seasons*, Summer, 1346.  
'The starry Galileo.' Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, IV. 54.  
'Him of the Hundred Tales of Love.' Unidentified.  
'How profound,' etc. Stanzas 70-2.
41. 'Now in glimmer,' etc. Coleridge, *Cbristabel*, 169.  
'Moving wild laughter,' etc. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2. 865.  
'The double night,' etc. Stanza 81.  
'Seen of all eyes.' Cf. *Revelation*, i. 7.
- Note 2. This word is not English. It is, of course, French. The earliest usage given by the N.E.D. is 1803, in an account of the French army in Egypt. Southey, Coleridge and Carlyle were among its popularisers.
42. 'What from this barren being,' etc. Stanzas 93-5.
43. 'I see before me,' etc. Stanzas 140 and 141.  
'My task is done,' etc. Stanzas 185 and 186.

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### LORD BYRON'S TRAGEDY OF MARINO FALIERO

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings : Second Series*.

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44. *A previous theory*. For which see Hazlitt's 'Drama' article in the *London Magazine* of April, 1820 (vol. xviii. p. 309).  
*Manfred*. Published 1817. Hazlitt did not review it, but see his Byron in *The Spirit of the Age*.  
*'Prouder than when blue Iris bends.'* *Troilus and Cressida*, i. iii. 380.
45. *'Endureth much,' etc.* *Corinthians*, xiii. 4 and *Luke*, xiv. 11.  
*The pending controversy*. See the article, 'Pope, Lord Byron, and Mr. Bowles.'  
*'That was not the way.'* Cf. *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 121.  
*'One touch of nature,' etc.* *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. iii. 175.
46. *'On this side of idolatry.'* Ben Jonson, *Discoveries*.  
*'With blood upon his face.'* Cf. *Macbeth*, iii. iv. 12.
49. *'Lively, audible [spritely, waking] and full of vent.'* *Coriolanus*, iv. v. 238.
51. *Backing his friends*. Cf. 1 *Henry IV.*, ii. iv. 170.  
*'Native and endued,' etc.* Cf. *Hamlet*, iv. vii. 180-1.

### MR. CRABBE

Unsigned. The article, written as No. v. of John Scott's series of 'Living Authors,' following his death, was reprinted in part by Hazlitt in *The Spirit of the Age*. See vol. xi. pp. 164-9 and notes.

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51. *Audrey's inquiry*. *As You Like It*, iii. 3. 18.
52. *'Great is Diana,' etc.* *Acts*, xix. 28.
53. *'Turn diseases to commodities'* [commodity]. 2 *Henry IV.*, i. 2. 278.
56. *'Travels from Dan to Beersheba,' etc.* *'I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba and cry, " 'Tis all barren ! " '* Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*.  
*In the Street : Calais*.  
*'In a favouring hour.'* Unidentified.
57. *'Mincing poetry.'* 1 *Henry IV.*, iii. i. 133.  
*Note.* *Henry V.*, iv. 1. 284-97.
58. *Note.* Wordsworth, 'The Convict,' 42.
59. *'Of Hermit Quarle,' etc.* *The Parish Register*, i. 107-10.  
*'Here are no wheels,' etc.* *Ibid.*, i. 230-31.  
*'Fresh were his features,' etc.* *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 391-4.  
*'With ears that sweep,' etc.* *Ibid.*, iv. 1. 127.  
*'Alas ! your reverence,' etc.* *The Parish Register*, i. 454-7.
60. *'But from the day,' etc.* *Ibid.*, ii. 319-20.  
*'Morals.'* *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 29.  
*'How fair these names,' etc.* *The Parish Register*, ii. 283-300.
61. *'With him that circle,' etc.* Dryden, Prologue to *The Tempest*, 20.  
*'Thus by himself,' etc.* *The Borough*, Letter xxii, 171-204.

### POPE, LORD BYRON, AND MR. BOWLES

Unsigned. First reprinted by Hazlitt's son in *Lectures on the English Poets* (1841).

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62. *'Invariable principles.'* Byron is quoted, in allusion to the Rev. William Lisle Bowles's (1762-1850) *Invariable Principles of Poetry, in a Letter addressed to Thomas Campbell, Esq., occasioned by some Critical Observations in his Specimens*

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- of *British Poetry, particularly relating to the Character of Pope* (1819). Bowles published in 1806 an edition of *Pope's Works* in 10 volumes; Pope was championed by Campbell in his 'Essay on English Poetry' in his *Specimens of the British Poets* (1819). For an account of Byron's part in the controversy see his *Letters and Journals*, ed. Prothero, v. Appendix iii.; and cf. Hazlitt's further comments in *Table Talk* (vol. viii. pp. 210, 223).
62. Good hating. Cf. vol. iv. p. 103 and note.  
*A spoiled child of nature and fortune.* Hazlitt is remembering this phrase when he writes in *The Spirit of the Age*: 'In fact, Lord Byron is the spoiled child of fame as well as fortune' (vol. xi. p. 75).  
*'This I like,' etc.* Cf. vol. i. p. 202.  
*Falconer's Shipwreck.* William Falconer's (1732-69) *The Shipwreck*, published in 1762.
63. *Jem Belcher.* James Belcher (1781-1811), who defeated Andrew Gamble in 1800.  
*Parson Supple.* In *Tom Jones*.  
*In the Preface to his Tragedy.* Marino Faliero.
64. *'A tale of bawdry.'* *Hamlet*, II. 2. 522.  
*If he publishes a work, etc.* The reference is to the first and second cantos of *Don Juan*, which were published in July 1819, without, however, 'his Lordship's own name in the title-page.' As with the third, fourth and fifth cantos, also issued anonymously by Murray in August 1821, the only imprint was that of Thomas Davison, the printer. Cf. vol. viii. p. 236 and note.  
 The completion of the work (1823-4) was undertaken by John Hunt.  
*'Each other's beams to share.'* Collins, *Ode, The Manners*, 56.
65. *'Our sweet voices.'* *Coriolanus*, II. 3. 179.  
*'Become mutual.'* Unidentified.  
*'Most small faults.'* Cf. *King Lear*, I. 4. 288.  
*'Ends of verse,' etc.* Butler, *Hudibras*, I. iii. 1011-12.
66. *'Sternhold and Hopkins had great qualms.'* The Earl of Rochester, *On a Parish Clerk with a bad voice*.
68. *'In the bond.'* *Merchant of Venice*, IV. i. 259.
69. *'Full of wise saws,' etc.* *As You Like It*, II. 7. 156.  
*As Partridge has it.* *Tom Jones*, Book IX. chap. 6.
70. *'So perfumed,' etc.* *Antony and Cleopatra*, II. 2. 198.
71. *'Like an Irishman in a row,' etc.* Unidentified.  
*'Roaming the illimitable ocean wide.'* Cf. *'Roaming the illimitable waters round.'* Wordsworth, *The Female Vagrant*, 175.  
*'Ill at these numbers.'* *Hamlet*, II. 2. 120.  
*'Damnable iteration in him.'* I. *Henry IV.*, I. 2. 101.
72. *'Keeps distance due.'* *Paradise Lost*, III. 578.  
*He hardly thinks Lady Charlemont, etc.* See Byron's *Letter*, ed. Prothero (*Letters and Journals*, v. 549).  
*The late Mr. John Scott.* Whose function as critical arbiter of the *London Magazine* Hazlitt conceived himself to be exercising, following Scott's death in the *Blackwood* duel. Cf. the introductory note to the previous article, 'Mr. Crabbe.' He was acting, in fact, as advisory editor to the first proprietor, Robert Baldwin, of the April, May and June issues, prior to the sale of the magazine to Taylor and Hessey. See *Life*, pp. 315, 326.  
*'Luscious as locusts,' etc.* *Othello*, I. 3. 354.  
*The grand-daughters of Mr. Coutts.* The two Misses Burdett, presumably the daughters of Sir Francis Burdett and therefore grand-daughters of Thomas Coutts the banker, were presented at court on May 3, 1821.

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73. *The Editor of the New Monthly Magazine.* Campbell having undertaken the editorship of the *London Magazine's* rival, for Colburn, in January 1821.  
 'High arbiter,' etc. *Paradise Lost*, II. 908-9.  
 'All the art of art is flown.' Cf. the note on 'All the life of life was flown' in vol. VIII. p. 24.  
 'The stones and tower,' etc. Cf. *Peter Bell*, 856 *et seq.*  
 'Host of Human Life.' Byron in his Letter speaks of having met Bowles at the house 'of our venerable host of *Human Life*,' i.e. Rogers, the Poet.
75. 'Of amber-beaded snuff-box,' etc. Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, IV. 123-4.  
*In Spence's Anecdotes.* The passage is given by Hazlitt in his *Edinburgh Review* notice of the book (vol. XVI. p. 166).  
 'Denote no foregone conclusion.' Cf. *Othello*, III. 3. 428.  
*Hurlotbrumbo. Hurlo-Tbrumbo; or The Supernatural*, a burlesque by Samuel Johnson (1691-1773), produced in 1729.  
 'How far,' etc. *The Merchant of Venice*, V. 1. 90.
76. 'Creation's tenant,' etc. Unidentified.  
 'So was it,' etc. Cf. Wordsworth's 'My heart leaps up,' etc.  
 l. 4 from bottom. From this point to the end of the paragraph on the next page Hazlitt is reproducing a passage from his *Yellow Dwarf* paper, 'The Opera,' of May 1818. See vol. XX. pp. 93-4 and notes.
77. *Amelia's 'busbed mutton.'* *Amelia*, Book X. chap. V  
*Almanach des gourmands.* See *The Edinburgh Review*, March 1821.
78. 'Circumscription and confine.' *Othello*, I. 2. 27.
79. 'The poor man's only music.' Coleridge, *Frost at Midnight*, 29.  
 'The earth bath bubbles,' etc. *Macbeth*, I. 3. 79.  
*A Count Rumford stove.* Sir Benjamin Thompson, Count von Rumford (1753-1814), scientist, popularly known for his innovations in the economical warming of houses and cooking of food.  
 'Loud-bissing urn.' Cowper, *The Task*, The Winter Evening, 38.  
 'Enforc'd to seek,' etc. *The Faerie Queene*, I. 1. 7 and 8.
80. 'A thing of life.' 'She walks the waters like a thing of life.' Byron, *The Corsair*, I. III.  
 'Behold the lilies,' etc. Cf. *S. Matthew*, VI. 28-9.  
 'Daffodils,' etc. *A Winter's Tale*, IV. 4. 118.
81. 'Hail, adamant steel,' etc. Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden*, Part I, II. 201-6.  
 'Launched,' etc. *The Rape of the Lock*, II. 4.  
 'Strange that such difference,' etc. Byron, 'On the Feuds between Handel and Bononcini.'
82. 'Let me not,' etc. *The Canterbury Tales*, The Clerke's Tale, 880.  
*The Pandemonium.* *Paradise Lost*, Book II.  
*A character of Pope.* That is, Hazlitt's own *Edinburgh Magazine* paper, of February 1818, 'On the Question Whether Pope was a Poet.' See vol. XX. pp. 89-92 and notes

## THE PIRATE

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85. 'So potent art.' *The Tempest*, V. 1. 50.  
*A far war-cry to Lochiel.* See vol. XVIII., note to p. 313.
86. *The model of that described by Mr. Coleridge.* Hazlitt's reference is to *Blackwood's Magazine* for October 1821, 'Selections from Mr. Coleridge's Literary

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- Correspondence, No. I.' Letter iv. See his *Miscellanies* (Bohn, ed. Ashe), pp. 246 *et seq.*  
 'Guns, drums, trumpets,' etc. Pope, *Imitations of Horace*, 1. 26.  
 'Hell itself,' etc. Cf. *The Tempest*, 1. 2. 214.  
*There be land pirates, etc.* Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, 1. 3. 25.  
*Multum abludit imago.* Horace, *Satires*, 11. iii. 320.  
 91. 'A brave man in distress.' Macheath is described by Lucy as 'a great man in distress.' *The Beggar's Opera*, Act III. Scene 4.  
 'The pale face and raven locks.' Adapted from the description of Minna in Chap. III.  
 'So fond.' *Othello*, 1. 3. 320.  
 'Strange power of speech.' Unidentified.  
*The Beacon.* See vol. XI., note to p. 68.  
 93. 'Cathedral's choir and gloom.' Cf. vol. X. p. 207.

### PEVERIL OF THE PEAK

Unsigned. First reprinted by Waller and Glover.

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95. 'Thinly scattered,' etc. *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 1. 48.  
*There were two things, etc.* This passage, to the end of the paragraph on the next page ('might not such a man have written the Scotch Novels?'), was suppressed in all but a few copies of the *London Magazine*. A copy of the first uncanceled issue more than a year later came into the hands of *Blackwood's Magazine*, which in its number for August 1824 made it the text of an article, 'Profligacy of the London Periodical Press.' The author of the review was said to be 'Mr. TAYLOR, senior partner in the house of Taylor and Hessey . . . We take a pleasure in hanging him upon a gibbet.' The *London Magazine* for October 1824 contained John Taylor's 'Reply to Blackwood,' in which he said: 'The Review in question was written by a celebrated Critic—was received too late for examination—and was cleared of the passage objected to, as soon as possible, from a motive of *good feeling* towards the Author of the Novel.' For Hazlitt's contemporary comment on Taylor's explanation see *Notes of a Journey* (vol. X., note to p. 144), and for his views on Scott as a politician the notes to 'Sir Walter Scott' in *The Spirit of the Age* (vol. XI. pp. 67 and 68). The suppressed passage is here reprinted from *Blackwood's Magazine*.  
 'He knows all qualities,' etc. *Othello*, III. 3. 259.  
 96. 'The wisest,' etc. Cf. Pope, *An Essay on Man*, IV. 282.

### MR. BECKFORD'S VATHEK

Unsigned. Now first reprinted.

I am indebted to Beckford's biographer, Mr. J. W. Oliver, for drawing my attention to this article.

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98. *The Caliph Vathek.* See vol. IX., note to p. 56. Hazlitt probably read *Vathek*, and wrote this article during or immediately after his visit to Fonthill in September 1823. He had visited it a year previously for *The London Magazine*,

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- when he writes of Beckford as a collector only and makes no mention of *Vathek*. See vol. xviii. pp. 173-80.
98. Lord Byron has borne testimony to its attractions. In notes to *The Giaour* (1813) and *The Siege of Corinth* (1816).  
 'Know all qualities with a learned spirit.' *Othello*, III. 3. 259.  
 A single sentence. This sentence is quoted more than once by Hazlitt. Cf. vol. ix. p. 56.  
*True as touch*. Cf. vol. xviii. p. 377 and note.
99. 'Restless ecstasy.' *Macbeth*, III. 2. 22.
103. 'Vice, to be hated,' etc. Cf. Pope, *Essay on Man*, II. 217-18. This is the invariable form in which Hazlitt makes the quotation.  
 'The rest return to laughter.' *King Lear*, IV. i. 6.  
*Thrown stifling back*. Unacknowledged form *Paradise Lost*, XI. 313.  
 'A good piece of work.' Cf. "'Tis a very excellent piece of work.' *The Taming of the Shrew*, I. i. 258.  
 'Fairer than the enamel of Frangestan.' Cf. vol. ix. p. 60 and note.  
 'The fatal Cleopatra,' etc. Dr. Johnson, Preface to Shakespeare (*Works*, Oxford, 1825, v. 118).  
 'You shall relish,' etc. Cf. *Othello*, II. 1. 166.

### MR. LANDOR'S IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings: First Series*.

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104. Since his two former volumes. Published in 1824, and reviewed (before he had met Landor) by Hazlitt in the *Edinburgh Review*. See vol. xvi. pp. 240 et seq.
105. 'Prosing or versing.' Milton, *Church Government*, II. Preface.  
*The posy of a ring*. Unacknowledged from *Hamlet*, III. 2. 164.  
 'The red-leaved tablets [table] of the heart.' Heywood, *A Woman Killed With Kindness*, II. iii.
106. 'Appal the guilty,' etc. *Hamlet*, II. ii. 590.  
*Our present administration*. The Wellington ministry, 1828-30.  
*The towers of St. Angelo*. The Castel St. Angelo, the papal prison at Rome.
107. Bolivar. Simon Bolivar (1783-1830), the hero of South American independence.  
*An outrageous note*. The note is, as to a portion of it: 'The condemnation of Malesherbes, and the coronation of Buonaparte, are the two most detestable crimes committed by the French in the whole course of their Revolution. How different the destiny of the best and worst man amongst them!' Cf. *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIV. p. 236).  
*El Rey Netto*. Ferdinand VII. of Spain, last European upholder of the unqualified doctrine of Divine Right (1784-1833).  
 'Ob for a jest [curse] to kill.' Otway, *Venice Preserved*, II. ii.  
*Foote*. Samuel Foote (1720-77), actor and farce writer.  
*Tom Brown*. Wit and satirist (1663-1704).
108. *Cant about Schill and Hoffer*. A reference to Wordsworth's *Poems Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty*.  
*Francis*. Francis II. of Austria (1768-1835), of the Holy Alliance.  
 'Hitherto shalt thou come.' *Job*, xxxviii. 11.
109. Mr. Colburn. The publisher, not only of Theodore Hook's *Sayings and Doings*, but of several of Hazlitt's books, and, on the latter's recommendation to Landor, of the third series of *Imaginary Conversations* here under review.

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

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109. *That man . . . who came from Ireland.* The Rt. Hon. John Wilson Croker (1780-1857), Secretary to the Admiralty and *Quarterly* reviewer. Cf. vol. xii. pp. 101, 183, and vol. xx. p. 113. Landon, it is evident, drew on Hazlitt's conversation for his 'English Visitor.'
- A fellow brought back in chains.* Theodore Hook (1788-1841), editor of *John Bull*, was arrested in 1823 for a debt of £12,000 due to the Government on account of defalcations discovered in his accounts as Treasurer and Accountant-General of Mauritius.
- 'Call you this backing of your friends?' 1 *Henry IV.*, II. iv. 170.
- 'Who shall decide,' etc. Pope, *Moral Essays*, Ep. III.
- 'Babbles of . . . green reputations.' Cf. *Henry V.*, II. iii. 17-18.
- Count Julian. Published in 1812.
110. *Halidon Hill.* Published in 1823.
- Mr. Barry Cornwall.* B. W. Proctor (1787-1874) published his *Dramatic Scenes* in 1819.
- The author of Virginius.* James Sheridan Knowles (1784-1862), a friend of Hazlitt's from youth. Cf. *The Spirit of the Age*.

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

In the present section are reprinted (1) Hazlitt's political writings for the period 1813-19 which he omitted from *Political Essays*; and (2) his writings on politics subsequent to the publication of that volume which he did not reprint elsewhere.

### THE LAUREAT

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings: Second Series*.

Hazlitt's 'Mr. Southey, Poet Laureat,' of September 18, reprinted by himself in *Political Essays* (vol. vii. pp. 24-5), should be read in conjunction with the present paper, which, perhaps by an oversight, he did not reprint.

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115. *Our statement.* See *Political Essays* (vol. vii. p. 24).
- 'Some truth there is [was],' etc. Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, I. 114.
- The choice lies between Mr. Scott and Mr. Southey.* See vol. vii., note to p. 24.
- Energetic lines.* Southey's *Life of Nelson*, published in this year and dedicated to Croker, had on its title-page a motto from Canning's poem, 'Ulm and Trafalgar.'
- 'The Poet, Sir, is mine honest friend.' Unidentified.
- 'The trou de rat, the Ciudad Rodrigo.' Unidentified.
116. 'The Laureat Hearse where Lyric [Lycid] lies.' *Lycidas*, 151.
- 'A worthy person to fill the chair of the immortal Dryden.' Here, and elsewhere in the article, *The Courier* is quoted.
- Literary labours in the cause of the Peninsula.* In the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, particularly. Southey's *History of the war*, in three volumes, did not make its appearance until 1823-32.
- 'Pbilarmonia's undivided dale.' See vol. vii., note to p. 142.
- 'Two such I saw,' etc. *Comus*, 300 seq.
117. *The personal application.* If not intelligible to *The Courier*, readers of 'My First Acquaintance with Poets' will not be likely to miss it.
- 'Solenn temple and gorgeous palaces,' etc. *The Tempest*, IV. i. 152-6, freely quoted.



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### THE POLITICAL AUTOMATON

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings : Second Series*.

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117. *Like a poor player, etc.* Cf. *Macbeth*, v. 5. 24.

### THEATRICALS

Unsigned. Now first reprinted.

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118. '*Harp and voice.*' Southey, *Carmen Triumphale*, Stanza i.  
*At Sadler's Wells . . . a young chimney-sweeper.* Hazlitt has an allusion to this incident in his posthumously published '*Definition of Wit*' (vol. xx.).  
*By crossing the Irish Channel.* Cf. *ante*, footnote to p. 154.

### ON THE COURIER AND TIMES NEWSPAPERS : A POSTSCRIPT

An omitted concluding paragraph from the article reprinted in *Political Essays* (vol. vii. p. 39). Cf. introductory note to '*The Lex Talionis Principle*,' below.

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119. *Mr. Coleridge's Lectures at Bristol.* Coleridge delivered several courses of lectures at Bristol in this winter, that referred to presumably being his course on Milton and Shakespeare commenced on Dec. 30 (Ashe, p. 456).

### THE LEX TALIONIS PRINCIPLE

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings : Second Series*.

A leading article, to which a title has been supplied, written between the Battle of Leipzig and the first fall of Napoleon. Some light on its non-appearance in *Political Essays* may perhaps be found in an entry of Crabb Robinson's (November 17, 1814) discussing Hazlitt's dismissal from the *Morning Chronicle*: 'On former occasions he [James Perry, the editor] had been vastly pleased with H.'s articles, and had turned them into leading articles. H. says P.'s conduct is to be ascribed to the fall of Buonaparte, "by which," says he, "my articles were made in the event very unfortunate"' (*Life*, p. 163). This would be a case in point, no doubt; so much so, that Hazlitt possibly thought it wiser not to recover it.

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120. '*Can the Ethiopian, etc.* *Jeremiab*, xiii. 23.  
'*Search then the ruling passion, etc.* Pope, *Moral Essays*, i. 174.
121. '*Gliding meteorous.*' *Paradise Lost*, xii. 629.  
*Mr. Whitbread.* Samuel Whitbread (1758-1815), brewer and Whig politician, withdrew his motion of censure on the Government on the latter's assurance that an accommodation would be sought with Napoleon. See Hazlitt's '*Letters to Vetus.*'  
*Moderate and altered tone of ministers . . . plighted honour of the Prince.* The interested reader may consult the Prince Regent's speech on the opening of Parliament, November 4, 1813, and Lord Liverpool's speech on the Address.  
*The three blind calendars of Bagdat.* *Arabian Nights*, Story of the Three Calendars.

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122. *Ismael and Warsaw*. The reference is to the partition of Poland (1795) by Russia and Prussia, following the storming of Ismael (1790) and Warsaw (1794), and the massacre of their respective inhabitants.  
*'Feels a stain like a wound.'* Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*.  
*Summum jus, summa injuria.* Cicero, *De Officiis*, I. 10.  
*Golden times of Ariosto.* Orlando Furioso, Book xv.  
*Mr. Stroehling.* P. E. Stroehling, Court painter of Russian origin, an exhibitor at the Royal Academy, 1803-26.  
 Note. *'Gentlemen and men of honour.'* See vol. VII., note to p. 37.  
*'Pure religion breathing household laws.'* Wordsworth's Sonnet, 'O friend, I know not which way I must look.'  
 123. *The Corsican upstart.* See below, note to p. 133.  
*'Born to greatness . . . achieve it.'* *Twelfth Night*, II. v. 158, etc.  
 124. *It was remarked by Swift.* I have not identified this allusion. Cf. *ante*, p. 257.  
*'Hitherto shalt thou come,' etc.* *Job*, xxxviii. 11.  
*The virtuous Moreau.* Jean Victor Marie Moreau (1763-1813), French general, who was banished by Napoleon in 1804. On his return from America in 1813 he joined the Allies, and fell mortally wounded at the Battle of Dresden. Hazlitt's characterisation of him will be found in *The Life of Napoleon*, Chapter XLIX.  
*Crown Prince of Sweden.* Jean Baptiste Bernadotte (1763-1844), marshal of France. On his election as heir to the crown of Sweden in 1810 he joined the alliance against Napoleon. Cf. *ibid*.  
*'And let one spirit,' etc.* 2 *Henry IV.*, I. i. 157.

## THE LOUVRE

'The Fine Arts,' unsigned. First reprinted by Waller and Glover.

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125. *Blücher.* The fighting at Laon had taken place on March 9 and 10. Blücher entered Paris on March 31.  
*'Away to Heav'n,' etc.* *Romeo and Juliet*, III. I. 128.  
 126. *'Nay, if you mouth,' etc.* Cf. *Hamlet*, v. I. 306.  
*'Pigeon-liver'd,' etc.* *Hamlet*, II. 2. 605.  
*'Scrawls,' etc.* Pope, *Prologue to the Satires*, 19-20.  
*The treaty of Pilnitz.* See vol. VII. (*Political Essays*), p. 61 and note.  
*'This present ignorant time.'* Cf. 'This ignorant present.' *Macbeth*, I. 5. 58.  
*'Tell me your company,' etc.* The proverb is quoted in *Don Quixote*, Part II. chap. 23.  
 127. *'Stands the statue,' etc.* Thomson, *The Seasons*, Summer, 1347. The Venus de Medici was restored to Florence after the fall of Napoleon.  
*For there, in the Louvre, etc.* Hazlitt reproduces this passage, with a suitable alteration of tense, in the *English Comic Writers* (vol. VI. p. 149). See also 'On the Pleasure of Painting' (vol. VIII. pp. 15-16), *Notes of a Journey* (vol. X. p. 107), and *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIII. p. 212).  
*'There is old Proteus,' etc.* Wordsworth's Sonnet, 'The world is too much with us,' from memory.  
*'What's Hecuba to them,' etc.* *Hamlet*, II. 2. 585.  
*'Real feelings,' etc.* Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 101).  
*'We look up,' etc.* *Ibid*.  
*'Breathe can make them,' etc.* Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*, 54.

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127. *Wittgenstein, etc.* Louis Adolphe Pierre Wittgenstein (1769-1843); Ferdinand, Baron Wintzingerode (1770-1818), two well-known Russian generals.  
*'But once put out their light,' etc.* *Othello*, v. 2. 9.  
*'The worshippers of cats and onions.'* Unidentified.
128. *Poet who celebrated the fall,' etc.* Coleridge, presumably.  
*Mild paternal sway.* Hazlitt is fond of repeating this phrase from *The Excursion* (III. 716).  
*'The good old times.'* Cf. *ante*, pp. 182 *et seq.*  
*'Time-borrowed laws.'* Hazlitt elsewhere attributes this phrase to Wordsworth. See vol. VII., note to p. 151. I have not identified the usage, which is not that noted in vol. XVII., note to p. 325.

## CHATEAUBRIAND—THE QUACK

Unsigned. Now first reprinted.

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128. *The \*\*\*\*\* of France.* 'Coleridge,' no doubt. Cf. *ante*, p. 165.  
*'Whip me such prating knaves.'* 'Whip me such honest knaves.' *Othello*, I. 1. 49. 'Prating knave' is *Hamlet*, III. 4. 215.  
*The celebrated orator Fontanes.* Louis, Marquis de Fontanes (1757-1821), French poet and politician.
129. *The Genie du Christianisme.* Cf. *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIII. p. 310).  
*Duchess D'Angoulême.* Daughter of Marie Antoinette (1778-1851).  
*Well known to our readers.* From editorial and news paragraphs in *The Examiner*.

## THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

This and the three following letters are now first reprinted. For Hazlitt's later expression of his views on the arrest and condemnation of the Duke d'Enghien see *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. xv. pp. 224-30).

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132. *Tour Correspondent, 'Fair Play.'* Whose letter in *The Examiner* of September 10, to which Hazlitt is replying, was as follows:

'The Duke D'Enghien.

Sept. 8, 1815.

'Sir,—It is of great consequence that the opinions which the *Examiner* inculcates on important points should be pure and moral. I shall therefore make no apology for troubling you with a few remarks on a passage in your last Number.

'In the article entitled "Chateaubriand—the Quack," I observe the following sentence:—"After the death of the Duke D'Enghien (*wbom Bonaparte is accused of having murdered*, BECAUSE HE WAS NOT WILLING THAT THE SAID ROYAL DUKE SHOULD ASSASSINATE HIM,) the fanciful conscience of M. Chateaubriand took another false alarm; he gave up his employment, and returned to the valley of Montmorenci, about forty miles from Paris." Here, in my opinion, the writer does at least attempt to palliate, if not to justify, the execution of the Duke D'Enghien. And how does he do this? By taxing the Duke with a design to assassinate Bonaparte,—an accusation in support of which not an atom of proof can, I believe, be adduced. This, Sir, appears to me to be

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nothing less than traducing a gallant and honourable soldier for the purpose of exculpating his executioner. In plain English—it is defending *murder* by the aid of *calumny*.

'I hope it is a mistaken interpretation I have put on the passage, on which I have thus freely commented. If it be not so, you will surely disavow the article, and clear yourself from the very injurious imputation of maintaining such profligate doctrine as it contains.—I am, Sir, your very obedient humble servant,

FAIR PLAY.'

132. Note. *Cymbeline*, iv. 2. 72-86, with omissions.
133. *The gentleman who invented the nickname*. Coleridge is meant. See vol. xiv., note to p. 188.  
*Mr. Lewis Goldsmith*. Political writer and journalist (1763?-1846). Formerly an ardent sympathiser with the Revolution and conductor of an English newspaper in Paris by arrangement with the French Government, he returned to England in 1809, and, founding *The Anti-Gallican* (afterwards *British Monitor*), became notorious for his denunciations of Napoleon.  
*'There's a [such] divinity,' etc.* *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 123.  
*Napper Tandy*. James Napper Tandy (1740-1803), who was seized in Hamburg after his flight from Ireland in 1798.
134. *The husband of Catherine II and the father of Alexander I*. The first of whom, the Czar Peter III., met his death in mysterious circumstances in 1762, and the second, the Czar Paul I., was murdered in 1801.  
*The most atrocious event in modern history*. I have not identified this expression of Scott's opinion, to which Hazlitt makes a later reference (p. 167).  
*'Masterless passion,' etc.* *The Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1. 51-2 (Pope's text), as invariably quoted by Hazlitt.
135. *'Shew a monster to the thought.'* *'As if there were some monster in his thought.'* *Otello*, iii. 3. 107.
136. *'Why, Sir,' etc.* 'Fair Play's' second letter, of October 1, is quoted, here and later.
138. *'Be ignorant [innocent] of the knowledge,' etc.* *Macbeth*, iii. 2. 45-6.
139. *The Duke 'gallant.'* See above, note to p. 132.
140. *Sir John Cox Hipplesley*. Sir John Cox Hipplesley, first baronet (1748-1825), M.P. for Sudbury 1790-6 and 1802-19, chiefly associated with the cause of Catholic emancipation. Cf. vol. xi. p. 153.  
*'Why did you come between,' etc.* Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 1. 109-10.
141. *The Editor of the Times asks*. Cf. vol. iv., note to p. 294.  
*His last letter*. In *The Examiner* of October 29.  
*He also observes*. 'To the infinite entertainment of my friends, he imagines I have a fellow-feeling with the Editors of the *Times* and the *Courier*,—sorry scribblers, whose clumsy flatteries and low official swaggering I despise about as much as I reprobate the bastard patriotism and miserable scurrilities of Cobbett.'
142. *'One cries Mum,' etc.* Cf. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, v. 2. 6, etc.  
 Note. *The two brothers Faucher*. César and Constantin Fauchier, twin brothers (1759-1815), French generals, executed at Bordeaux in September during the 'White Terror' which followed the return of Louis XVIII. The name is misprinted 'Fauche' in the newspaper.  
*Porlier*. Cf. vol. vii. p. 95 and note.  
*Editor of the Sun*. See vol. xvi., note to p. 229.
143. *'The effete and effeminate race of the Bourbons.'* 'Fair Play' is quoted: 'As to

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- the Duke d'Enghien being *gallant* . . . he was the only warlike Prince . . . of the effete and effeminate race of the Bourbons.'
143. *Like Dr. Mayo*. See Boswell's *Johnson*, ed. G. B. Hill, II. 252. 'Henry Pimpernell,' etc. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, 2. 95-6.
145. 'It is hypocrisy against the Devil.' *Otello*, IV. 1. 6.  
*The delicate gentlewoman in the Arabian Nights*. See *The History of Sidi Nouman*.
1. 14. To the conclusion of Hazlitt's letter an editorial note (presumably Leigh Hunt's) is attached: 'This article has been delayed in order to soften some of the asperities.'
- An account in Rabelais*. Book IV. chap. xvi.  
*Your Correspondent 'Fair Play'*. Who took advantage of the editorial note (above) to conclude his share of the correspondence in the following terms: 'In support of all his [Peter Pickthank's] blustering, he brings forward after all no new evidence, nor establishes that which he formerly affected to adduce. I have therefore done with him, as I said I shall [*sic*], and shall now take my leave of Mr. Pickthank, wishing him better principles and a better temper, and when next he is inclined to defend the rotten cause of tyranny, whether exercised by a Bonaparte or a Bourbon, I advise him to chuse his case somewhat more warily, and to arm himself with *facts*, instead of "*asperities*."—I am, Sir, Yours, &c.,
- FAIR PLAY.'
147. *The virtuous Moreau*. Cf. *Political Essays* (vol. VII. p. 29).
149. *The Heroine of Bourdeaux*. The Duchesse d'Angoulême is alluded to. Cf. *ante*, pp. 129, 142 and notes.  
*'Entire affection scorneth [hateth] nicer bands.'* *The Faerie Queene*, I. viii. 40.  
*'At notable length.'* Hazlitt has been glancing back at the opening of 'Fair Play's' second letter, of October 1: 'I am sorry not to be convinced by your Correspondent "Peter Pickthank's" arguments, urged as they are at notable length and conveyed throughout in a strain of gentlemanlike politeness and exemplary temper.'
150. 'Striding the blast,' etc. Cf. *Macbeth*, I. 7. 22-3.  
*'His commandment,' etc.* *Hamlet*, I. 5. 110-12.  
*The 'asperities' alluded to in the note to my last.* See above, note to p. 145.  
*Note. The case of Captain Wright.* Cf. *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIV. pp. 223-4).  
*I have spoken rather scurvily of Cobbett in another place.* See the concluding paragraph of his 'Round Table' paper, 'On the Midsummer Night's Dream' (*The Examiner*, Nov. 26, 1815), in vol. XX.

### SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT ON THE DISTRESSES OF THE COUNTRY

'Literary Notice,' No. 9, unsigned. Now first reprinted.

The last of a series of three articles, the first two of which Hazlitt reprinted in *Political Essays*. The reason why he omitted the present one is not apparent. Cf. vol. VII., note to p. 113.

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152. 'Pride, pomp and circumstance,' etc. Cf. *Otello*, III. 3. 354.  
*John Reeves's Lives and Fortune Men*. See vol. III., note to p. 142.

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152. *Mr. Burke's Experimentum crucis.* This reference is to a passage in *Thoughts and Details on Security*, which Hazlitt quotes on p. 157.  
 'Great Leviathans,' etc. Cf. Burke, *Letter to a Noble Lord* (Bohn, v. 129).  
*The ingenious Mr. William Ward.* Financier (1787-1849); later, (1826) M.P. for the City of London.
153. *Lord Arden.* Charles George, second Baron Arden (1756-1840). I have not identified his claim to the emolument stated.  
*Lord Camden.* See vol. vii., note to p. 103.  
*Marquis of Buckingham, etc.* George Nugent Temple Grenville (1753-1813), second son of George Grenville, created Marquis of Buckingham in 1784.  
 Like Lord Camden, he held the position of teller of the exchequer, a sinecure post of great profit.  
*Marquis Wellesley.* See vol. vii. p. 23 and note.  
*Lord Grenville.* Who held the sinecure office of auditor of the exchequer, worth £4000 a year.  
*The band of gentlemen pensioners.* See vol. vii., note to p. 276.  
 'The horse knoweth his owner,' etc. 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib.' *Isaiab*, i. 3.
154. *Says the Common Hall.* Various resolutions of the Common Council of the City of London during this year were followed by an Address to the Prince Regent, on December 9, to which the Prince Regent replied.  
 Cf. *Political Essays* (vol. vii., note to p. 140).  
 Note. *Mr. Southey . . . has received.* Cf. vol. vii. p. 180 and note.  
*For some years, we know, etc.* Cf. vol. vii. p. 183 and note.  
*As thick as inkle-weavers.* An expression which is now obsolete, 'inkle' being 'a kind of linen tape, formerly much used for various purposes . . . inkle-weavers being supposed to contract intimacies sooner than other people on account of the inkle-loom being so narrow and close together.'—*N.E.D.*  
 'It feeds fat,' etc. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, i. 3. 48.
155. 'The justice of it pleases.' *Othello*, iv. i. 222.  
 'Full circle home.' See vol. v., note to p. 302.
157. 'Nightly-watch.' Cf. 'A night-watch constable.' *Love's Labour's Lost*, iii. i. 178.  
*Young Mirabel.* See Farquhar's *The Inconstant*, Act v. Scenes 2 and 4.

## RICH AND POOR

Now first reprinted.

A letter, without signature as printed, which appears to be in Hazlitt's vein of following up his own communications with anything else which he considers apposite.

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157. *His invidious paradox.* In *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity* (Bohn, v. 84).

## A NEW VIEW OF SOCIETY (CONCLUDED)

'Literary Notices,' No. 10, unsigned. Now first reprinted.

The continuation of the article of August 4, 1816, for which see *Political Essays* (vol. vii. pp. 97-103). The concluding portion only of the article is given in the text. The opening consists of a letter occupying nearly two pages of *The Examiner* defending

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Owen from the strictures of the earlier article, Hazlitt's comments on which, in the form of footnotes, are given below. This letter, signed 'Z.', is followed by a shorter letter signed 'A. C.,' Hazlitt's comments on which are reproduced in the text.

The article is headed with the quotation 'Il n'y a pas un sot qui ne trouve un plus grand sot qui l'admire. *Boileau*,' and begins, 'We have received on the subject of a former article on these publications [*An Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark; and A New View of Society*. By Robert Owen] the following letter.' To 'Z.'s' statement that the views expressed in Hazlitt's article are natural in those who have 'only heard of or but imperfectly considered the *New View* in its present or future probable effects' he attaches the footnote, 'We have been considering this *New View* for the last twenty years.' When 'Z.' goes on to say that 'It is not for men brought up and nurtured with ideas of false glory,—who have been dazzled with the tinsel splendour of the events of present and past ages,—whose feelings and rising sympathies have been swept away by the torrents of blood which have hardly ceased to flow . . . readily to understand the nature of a system which inculcates universal charity, love, and peace, among the children of the earth,' Hazlitt says:

'Does the writer address this to us? Thus, it ever is, if you attempt to reason with any of this enthusiastic tribe, they immediately mount their tub, and begin preaching to a mixed audience, putting you among the crowd, and whining out their senseless lamentations over you as all alike lost in blindness and error, because you differ from them! "Z." shall not preach at us in this manner; we do not belong to his congregation of catechumens, nor shall we join in with the responses of his litany. He shall not put his tricks upon travellers; nor clap his bad shillings into our pockets, nor pass off any sentiments he pleases as our's by his nasal ventriloquism. He thinks all opinions equally barbarous and prejudiced but his own. But we do not see the matter in the same point of view.'

On 'Z.'s' further remark that 'It is no wonder that views like these should be called "Utopian," or that men should doubt whether they could be taught to have bowels of humanity towards each other, or mutual compassion for their infirmities,' Hazlitt's comment is:

'We have expressed no such doubt; but we have said that this event has not taken place hitherto; that the attempt has been often made, and always failed; and that we see nothing in *the whole combination* [Z.'s italicised phrase, used earlier] of Mr. Owen's scheme to make it a bit more likely to make it happen in the next ten or twenty than in the last five thousand years. Does "Z." found his particular hopes on the interview between Mr. Owen and the Emperor Alexander? We differ with him in our idea of both these great men; and augur as little from the want of power in the Manager of New Lanark as from the want of will in the Autocrat of all the Russias.'

In answering Hazlitt's question, 'Wherein does New Lanark differ from the Old Utopia,' 'Z.' says that New Lanark 'presents nothing for incredulity to doubt of, or to provoke ridicule.' On which Hazlitt comments: 'With the exception of Mr. Owen's opinions and his friend's, we believe there may be some truth in this.'

To 'Z.'s' maxim, '*The door of knowledge once open, no man can shut*,' in reference to the reduction of the working day to 10½ hours, 'without any loss to the proprietors,' Hazlitt retorts: 'That we deny. The Prince Regent can open or shut the door of his travelling carriage as he pleases.'

In answer to Hazlitt's question, 'Does not Mr. Owen know that the same scheme, the same principles, &c.' 'were rife in 1793,' 'Z.' writes: 'I believe also, that during such period many enlightened men have endeavoured to propagate very valuable truths, and to cause them to be acted upon. But when they did so, they also

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

promulgated notions that were false; and while by these means the truths they would have taught were rendered useless, they succeeded to the fullest extent, as the unexampled horrors of this age can testify, in preparing the bitter cup of misery that has hitherto been so largely partaken of, and that remains to be emptied, perhaps by the present race, even to the dregs! On which Hazlitt comments: 'Then after all, the least admixture of falsehood is fatal to these schemes of reform, "as the unexampled horrors of this age can testify." Mr. Owen's scheme is free from them; so that we are to trust for safety and escape from the horrors of a new era only to the infallibility and immaculate virtues of this new Pope Joan of Philosophy.'

To a passage in which 'Z.' expresses his 'astonishment' at the writer of the article's 'misconception in identifying the system arising from the entire combination of the principles elicited in the Essays and Addresses, with any of the schemes that have hitherto tormented and deceived the human race,' Hazlitt appends the comment:

'The reasoning in this passage is quackery or ignorance in the extreme. The writer pretends to shew that Mr. Owen's project differs from other Utopian schemes, because he says its effects will be different from "the actual wars, misery, hatred, &c. which have hitherto filled the world." Does the writer mean that the Utopian principles of the authors referred to, "from Plato down to Mr. Godwin," consisted in recommending the continuance of this actual state of society, wars, misery, &c., or in recommending just the reverse of all this, or in other words, Mr. Owen's New View of Society?'

When 'Z.' goes on to praise Owen for his disclaiming 'all pretensions to invention, or to the smallest degree of praise, if he had even made the discovery himself,' Hazlitt's comment is: 'And yet his system is totally different from all others. He indeed takes great pains to disclaim the merit of invention in himself, which is as much as to insinuate that he has it.'

On the conclusion of 'Z.'s' letter the article proceeds: 'We have received another Letter on this subject, which confirms the old remark, that "a prophet is without honour in his own country," and also perhaps explains the reason of it.' 'A. C.'s' letter draws attention to a correspondence between Owen and a writer signing himself 'Gracchus' in the *Glasgow Chronicle* of the preceding March, and quotes the latter as asserting, on the authority of the Town Council of New Lanark, 'that *no such improvements as you claimed in your first Essay have actually taken place at New Lanark.*' To this challenge, 'A. C.' asserts, Mr. Owen has never replied; and he adds: 'How he manages to amuse "Leading men and Ministers of State" with his discoveries, I cannot imagine.'

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159. *Dr. Spurzheim*. On the occasion when Hazlitt met him, presumably. See 'On Dr. Spurzheim's Theory' (vol. xii. p. 137 and note).

160. '*He can call spirits, etc.*, and following quotation. Cf. *1 Henry IV.*, III. i. 53-5. '*His spirits shine through it.*' '*Your spirits shine through you.*' *Macbeth* III. i. 128.

161. '*Dear Thomas, etc.* Unidentified.

## MR. ENSOR'S ON THE STATE OF EUROPE

'Literary Notices,' Nos. 13 and 14. Now first reprinted.

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161. *Concerning the Convention of Cintra*. Wordsworth's pamphlet was published in 1809.



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161. *Mr. Ensor.* George Ensor (1769-1843), political writer. He was known in the Bentham circle, but seems to have resided principally in Ireland.
164. '*After our own heart.*' Unidentified.  
*We have heard of a wag.* Brummell. Cf. the paper, '*Brummelliana*,' in vol. xx.  
*'Men should be what they seem.'* *Otello*, III. 3. 126.
165. '*Patent to offend.*' *Ibid.*, IV. 1. 209.  
*Mr. Burke says.* Cf. *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 17).  
*'The universal Spanish nation.'* See vol. XI., note to p. 155.  
*'Out [out], vile jelly!'* *King Lear*, III. 7. 83.  
*'Carve him as a dish,' etc.* *Julius Cæsar*, II. 1. 173.
167. '*Victrix causa,*' etc. Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 118.  
*Mr. Walter Scott has declared.* Cf. *ante*, p. 134.  
*'Confusion had never made his master-piece.'* Cf. *Macbeth*, II. 3. 71.  
*Metre ballad-monger.* Cf. 1. *Henry IV.*, III. 1. 130.
168. '*Makes mad the guilty,*' etc. *Hamlet*, II. 2. 590.  
*'Horror on horror's head accumulates.'* Cf. *Otello*, III. 3. 370.  
*'Of lamentation loud,' etc.* *Paradise Lost*, II. 579-80.  
*'Wasting the earth,' etc.* Unidentified.
170. '*The enemy of the human race.*' 'I announce to the French, that I enter their territory at the head of an army already victorious, but not as an enemy (except of the Usurper, the enemy of the human race, with whom there can be neither peace nor truce).' Proclamation of June 21, 1815 (*Dispatches*, XII. 494). Cf. vol. V., note to p. 284.  
*'The right to do wrong.'* Cf. below, note to p. 177.
171. *Lord Wellington's Dilettanti Letter.* Letter to Lord Castlereagh, September 23, 1815. Cf. vol. XIII., note to p. 213.  
*'A great arithmetician,'* and following quotation. *Otello*, I. 1. 19-24.  
*'Most true and veritable.'* 'Indeed, isn't true?—Most veritable.' *Otello*, III. 4. 76.
172. *The declaration of Lord Liverpool.* 'The words of the treaty [of Vienna] did not mean that Bonaparte and his followers were to be treated as outlaws. They were to be combatted as a common enemy. The object of the Allies was to get rid of the present Government of France, and if possible to restore the Bourbons, but that was not a *sine qua non*. They would go to France to do away the Government if they could, but not to dictate a new one.' *Hansard* (xxx. 885).  
*The march to Paris.* Cf. vol. VII. p. 37 and note.
173. '*Had I three ears,*' etc. *Macbeth*, IV. 1. 78.

## A MODERN TORY DELINEATED

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings: Second Series*.

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174. '*Great moral lesson.*' See vol. XIII., note to p. 213.  
*Estimable and philanthropic discoverer.* Edward Jenner (1749-1823), the discoverer of vaccination, presumably.  
*Corporal punishment.* Flogging in the army and navy, as a preservative of discipline, was a great bone of contention in these days. Cobbett went to prison for two years, in 1810, for writing against it.  
*The criminal laws are wise, humane, and just.* They were, of course, on the contrary, '*ferocious*' (the adjective is that of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*,

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- latest edition), and remained so until 1832, when the Reform Parliament dealt with them.
174. *Police in the metropolis.* The subject of investigation by a Parliamentary Committee in this year, the ancient system of 'parish watchmen' was swept away by Sir Robert Peel's Act of 1829.
- Libel laws.* Southey, in the *Quarterly*, was making strenuous efforts to have them extended—to cover Cobbett and Hazlitt.
- Man-traps and spring-guns.* Made illegal in 1827.
- Chimney-sweepers.* After many years of agitation, in which *The Examiner* took an honourable and persistent part, the employment of 'climbing boys' was rendered finally illegal by an Act of 1842.
- Parish apprentices.* The compulsory apprenticeship of pauper children, with the abuses that accompanied it, survived till the Poor Law Commission of 1832.
175. *A spare diet.* The hit here is at Malthus's *Principles of Population*. Bloomfield. Robert Bloomfield (1766–1823), whose *Farmer's Boy* was published in 1800.
- 'Ignorant impatience of the people.' Unidentified.
- Usual and necessary consequences.* Cf. Wordsworth's preface to his 1816 volume, and Southey's *Quarterly* articles *passim*. See also the paper, 'Outlines of Political Economy,' below.
176. *A tailor's bill . . . a jeweller's.* The Prince Regent's, of course.
- Thousands of Protestants were tortured.* The reference is to the massacre at Nismes in 1815, following the restoration of Louis XVIII, the 'Desired.'
- Gloucester.* Where Hazlitt, on a visit to his parents at Bath (see *Life*, pp. 210–11), rested from the coach presumably, and got the cramp out of his limbs by penning this spirited diatribe.

## THE TIMES NEWSPAPER

'Literary Notices,' No. 18, unsigned. Now first reprinted.

The first of four papers, of which Hazlitt reprinted the remaining three in *Political Essays*. See vol. vii. pp. 131 *et seq.*

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177. *Arndt.* Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769–1860), German poet and patriot.
- '*The right divine of kings,*' etc. Pope, *Dunciad*, iv. 188.
- '*Come, let me clutch thee.*' *Macbeth*, II. i. 34.
- '*And there the antic sits,*' etc. *Richard II.*, III. 2. 162–3.
178. '*Fine word, legitimate.*' *King Lear*, I. 2. 18.
- '*These are most virtuous.*' Cf. 'Where virtue is, these are most virtuous' (*A Reply to 'Z.'*, vol. ix. p. 4).
- Green-eyed, velvet-pawed, etc.* 'The grave, demure, insidious, spring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed philosophers.' Burke, *Letter to a Noble Lord* (Bohn, v. 142).
1. 9, from bottom. The sentence beginning 'He would proscribe,' and ending at the last line of p. 180, is possibly Hazlitt's record in the matter of sustained expression. It is, at all events, longer by more than half a page than the sentence noted in *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. xv. p. 14). It will be noticed that it is followed by another considerable one—the two together providing a very pretty pair of millstones for the grinding between them of 'the little pert pragmatical plebeian Editor of the *Times*.' Cf. vol. vii., note to p. 194.

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179. Lettres de cachet. Cf. *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIII. p. 44).  
*A man of honour and a cavalier.* 'A nation of men of honour, and of cavaliers.'  
 Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 89).  
 180. 'Brunswick's fated line.' *Carmen Nuptiale*, *The Dream*, Stanza 30.  
 181. *The Duchess d'Angoulême.* Cf. ante, p. 129 and note.  
 182. *More room than we have for it at present.* As noted above, he resumed the subject of *The Times* newspaper in three further articles, of December 15 and 22, and January 12, 1817, which he reprinted (with an omission) in *Political Essays*. This omission is from the second article, which in the newspaper continues after the words 'proof against conviction' (vol. VII. p. 137) as follows:

'What a pity he is not a poet or a man of genius! (Your dull fellows ought to be honest; for every body ought to be something.) He might then instead of wholesome truths have given us agreeable lies; for plain facts, pompous fictions; he might have strewed the flowers of poetry on the rotten carcase of corruption, and have made the ugly face of war look amiable at a distance. He might have trumped up a romantic episode about the Duchess d'Angoulême, as Mr. Burke did about her wretched mother, or have seen visions on the mountain tops like Mr. Wordsworth, or have dreamt a dream more in the manner of Spenser than 'The Laureat's Lay'. There might then have been something like an observation, a thought, a trope, a jest, a lucky epithet, a well-written sentence, in all the long, dreary, heavy columns of *The Times* Newspaper. But as our author cannot soar, he grovels; and no one ever sunk so low. He is perfect Grub-street. His want of eloquence renders him abusive; he has no power over words, or he would not call names at the rate he does. He throws dirt and rubbish at the heads of his adversaries, because he can get nothing else to throw. Do you think he would go on for ever with that round of slang-phrases, dreadful to the ear, and petrific even to behold; monstrous, prodigious, unutterable, without argument, without sense or decency, calculated only to stupify or disgust, with which he piles up the columns of *The Times* Newspaper, if he had any resources either of imagination or understanding? It is the want of power equal to his will, that inflames his malice and inflates his style; he makes up for what he wants in strength, by coarseness; for what he wants in variety, by repetition; for what he wants in sallies of wit, by systematic dullness; for what he wants in reason, by brutal outrage. And then, did any mortal ever read such a style? The flowers of Billingsgate, arranged according to the rules of Lindley Murray's English Exercises, with all the ridiculous pedantry of subjunctive moods and adverbial expletives:

"In many a winding bout  
 Of linked dullness long drawn-out."<sup>1</sup>

It is as if the celebrated pastry-cook in Cornhill should get cart-loads of mud to do up in twelfth cakes, with cuts of kings, queens, and bishops, for his Christmas customers. All that is low in understanding, vulgar and sordid in principle in city politics, is seen exuding from the formal jaws of *The Times* newspaper, as we see the filth, and slime, and garbage, and offal of this great city pouring into the Thames, from the sewers and conduit-pipes of the scavengers' company. It is a patent water-closet for the dirty uses of legitimacy: a leaden cistern for obsolete prejudices and upstart sophistry "to knot and gender in."<sup>2</sup> Is this an exaggerated account? No. We have not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *L Allegro*, 139-40.

<sup>2</sup> *Otello*, IV. 2. 61.

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words to do justice to the subject. *The Times* Newspaper is a phenomenon without any parallel in history : it is the triumph of the reign of George III. It is supposed to be the organ of the Stock Exchange politics ; and, to be sure, there is a wonderful sympathy between them. Neither Burke nor Junius would have done so well. There is nothing in the pages of *The Times* that can lose in loftiness or elegance by repetition in the money-market, or draw off the attention of the bulls and bears from their ledgers, or their soups and venison. The vulgarity of the Editor's style might even receive a romantic tincture from the Hebraism of its pronunciation, and its monotony would be agreeably relieved by the discordant gabble of that disinterested congregation of stock-jobbing Jews and Gentiles. The secret of the composition of *The Times* is this. The city wants a bugbear to suit their interest, and the Editor of the city paper creates a bugbear out of his malice. He nicknames this bugbear, but as he does not believe in it, he repeats his nickname ten or a dozen times every day, till by so doing he begins to believe it. They begin to believe it too ; and the echo and buz of the Stock Exchange gives him courage to go on. He then tries other and more odious nicknames, which he and others believe, not because they are true, but because they are odious, and gratify the malice of the writer, and answer the readers' ends. Thus the city and the city Editor go on hand in hand, creating a bugbear out of nothing, and swelling it into a monster, heaping all sorts of vices and deformities upon it, and believing them all, in proportion as they are incredible and contradictory—if they are disproved, repeating them the louder—making the disgust, fear and hatred, which their bugbear inspires, a proof of its existence, and determined more and more to indulge their disgust, fear and hatred, in proportion as their passions and prejudices have no other foundation than their own spite and credulity—drowning reason in passion—overcoming common sense, by shocking common decency—believing in the chimeras of their own brain, from their very hideousness, as children put faith in apparitions, in proportion to their dread of them—ringing everlastingly in each other's ears, what they each wish to believe ; and believing that there is some reason for the everlasting din and noise they make, because they make it—creating a war-bugbear, 'because they wanted something to go to war with, requiring the same wanton a. ' unprincipled sacrifices of the blood and treasure of their country to be made to this phantom of their own making, as to the direst necessity ; and persisting in the justice and wisdom of their measures, from the very miseries which these helpmates of the Bourbons have brought upon the world—to gratify the mercantile avarice of the Stock Exchange and the literary vanity of its tool, the Editor of *The Times*. The interest of the Stock Exchange, and the philosophy of the Editor of *The Times*, no longer, however, draw the same way ; and we suspect they will soon dissolve partnership. "Such writers do their country best service in the end ; kept like an apple in the jaw of an ape, first mouthed, and last swallowed : it is but squeezing them, and spunge, you shall be dry again." <sup>1</sup>

### SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE GOOD OLD TIMES

'Political Examiner,' unsigned. Now first reprinted.

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182. *A work in French.* Which I have not identified.

'Sudden death.' *Book of Common Prayer.* The Litany.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Hamlet*, iv. 2. 19-23.

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182. 'That sweet sleep.' *Othello*, III. 3. 333.  
 'The right divine,' etc. See above, note to p. 177.  
 'Primrose path of dalliance.' *Hamlet*, I. 3. 50.
183. 'The milk of human kindness.' *Macbeth*, I. 5. 18.
185. 'The gentlemen and men of honour.' See vol. VII., notes to pp. 37, 151.  
 'The best of Kings.' See vol. IV., note to p. 305.
186. *Mr. Coleridge would not have been shocked.* Cf. vol. VII. pp. 149-50.  
*Mr. Wordsworth, etc.* Cf. vol. V. p. 128 and note.  
*Dr. Stoddart . . . turned out of the Times.* See vol. VII., note to p. 151.  
*Have sent Mr. Cobbett out of the country . . . by an Exchequer process.* When Cobbett sailed for America, on March 27, a prosecution by the Stamp Office was pending for the recovery of £18,000 penalties on the sale of his unstamped *Register*.  
 'Grow milder.' Unidentified.  
*Suspended Cashman and the Habeas Corpus.* John Cashman was hanged for his share in the rioting following the Spa-Fields meeting (December 2, 1816) in March. Habeas Corpus was suspended in February.
188. *Servetur ad imum, etc.* Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 126-7.  
*The King's Castle.* See vol. XIII., note to p. 44.  
 'The good old times.' Cf. *ante*, p. 128.  
 'Time-ballooned laws.' See *as above*.  
 'The Civil Doctor.' Stoddart.
189. 'The healing could come,' etc. See vol. VII., note to p. 190.  
 'Religion, morality, and social order.' Southey, in the *Quarterly*, is quoted. See text next page.  
 'Oh, [Thou] ever strong,' etc. *King John*, III. 1. 117.  
 'Royal fortitude.' See vol. V., note to p. 233.  
*The bastard savage.* Caliban, presumably.  
 'Determined enemies of the Established Church.' Coleridge in *The Courier* is quoted. See the letter 'Mr. Coleridge and Mr. Southey,' which follows.
190. *The massacres at Nismes.* See *ante*, note to p. 176.  
 Note. *Mr. C. in the Courier observes.* See the second of his articles in defence of Southey, which are the subject of the letter, 'Mr. Coleridge and Mr. Southey,' which follows.
191. 'The cant of liberal ideas.' Unidentified.  
 I. 27. From the allusion to 'one of our greatest men' it would appear that Hazlitt, for the main text of this article, is paraphrasing rapidly from the French original.
196. 'A fool indeed.' See *ante*, p. 190 footnote.

### MR. COLERIDGE AND MR. SOUTHEY

Now first reprinted.

The writer of this letter (see date at end) is replying instantaneously to Coleridge's two articles in *The Courier* of March 17 and 18, 'Vindication of Mr. Southey against Mr. Wm. Smith' (*Essays on his Own Times*, 1850, iii. 39-50). We do not know who else would be likely to be quite so instantaneous, except Hazlitt. The assumption of a character other than his own is in keeping with other of his letters which he reprints in *Political Essays*. (Cf. vol. VII. pp. 128-9.)

Coleridge in his second article expressed surprise at Mr. William Smith, M.P., 'condescending to sing base to the Hunts, Hazlitts and Cobbetts. The exultation is pardonable in them. For what can be more natural than for such creatures to

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

fling out and wax wanton proud on the supposed discovery, that a man of Southey's genius and rank in literature once thought like themselves?' See 'The Courier and Wat Tyler' in *Political Essays* (vol. vii. pp. 176-86) for Hazlitt's more leisurely reply.

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197. *Proximus ardet Ucalegon.* Virgil, *Aeneid*, ii. 311.

'The swinish multitude.' See vol. vii., note to p. 275.

*Mr. Coleridge recited an Ode of his dear Friend.* We do not seem to hear elsewhere of this occasion, which is, however, quite in the spirit of other published references by Coleridge to Southey.

198. *Returning to him the quotation from Horace.* Coleridge had quoted 'the old Horatian verdict,

"Who basely wounds an *absent* friend's fair fame  
Or sculks from his defence when others blame,  
Is——"

and added, 'but we leave the completing line to be translated in private by those whom it may concern.' See Horace, *Satires*, i. iv. 81-5.

*I do not speak of the author, etc.* This peroration, of course, follows Coleridge: 'At the first opportunity we shall take up the defence (yet that is a paltry phrase, fitter for the charge than the reply to it!) of Southey, the Poet of the Thalaba, the Madoc, the Kehama, the Roderick, of Southey the philologist, the historian, the politician! Yet these are but the costly setting. The gem itself is Southey, the Man.'

*Bristol.* Where Hazlitt may quite well (although we do not know him to) have been. Cf. the present editor's *Life* (p. 227). He is absent from *The Examiner's* theatre for the latter half of the month and the first week of April. (Cf. *ante*, note to p. 176.)

## THE TREATMENT OF STATE PRISONERS

A leading article, to which the title has been supplied. Now first reprinted. See the articles, 'On the Spy-System' and 'On the Treatment of State Prisoners,' reprinted in *Political Essays* (vol. vii. pp. 208 *et seq.*).

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199. *The motion relative to the treatment of poor Evans.* See the debate of July 2, 'Mr. Evans—Suspension of the Ilabec Corpus' (*Hansard*, xxxvi. 1291). For Thomas Evans see vol. vii. p. 214 and note.

'Occupation gone.' Cf. *Othello*, iii. 3. 357.

200. 'Light, transitory, and vain.' Cf. *Paradise Lost*, iii. 445-6.

'All is conscience and tender heart.' Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, 150. *What, so hot!* Cf. *King Lear*, v. 3. 67.

201. 'The bealthful [native] bue of resolution,' etc. *Hamlet*, iii. 1. 84-5. *The Green Bag.* See vol. ix. p. 34 and note.

## THE PRESS, ETC.

Unsigned. First reprinted by Waller and Glover.

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202. *M. Jollivet.* Jean Baptiste Moise, Comte Jollivet (1753-1818), a prominent French politician.

'Hads't thou believ'd,' etc. *Zapolya*, Prelude, Scene 1. The play was just published (Christmas 1817).

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203. *Was one of the passages, etc.* See the last chapter of *Biographia Literaria*.  
 'Restored,' etc. *Carmen Triumphale*, Stanza 18.  
 'A full solemn man.' *Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, 209.  
 'With thousand-fold reverberation.' Unidentified.  
*He will not answer, etc.* See ante, note to p. 142.
204. *St. Peter is well at Rome.* See vol. vii, note to p. 17.  
*Odes on Hoffer, etc.* See ante, note to p. 108.  
 'A dateless bargain,' etc. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 3. 115.  
 'Stretching out,' etc. *Macbeth*, iv. 1. 117.  
 'The same that was,' etc. Southey, *Carmen Nuptiale*, Stanza 52.
205. *Mrs. Tofts.* See Hogarth's 'Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism,' where the well-known imposture of Mary Tofts (1701?-1763) is ridiculed.  
 'Charm these deaf adders,' etc. Cf. *Psalms*, lviii. 4, 5.  
 'Drops which sacred pity,' etc. *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 123.  
 'Which knaves,' etc. Butler, *Hudibras*, i. i. 35-6.
206. 'The Gods,' etc. Cf. *As You Like It*, iii. 3. 16.  
 'A mingled [medley] air,' etc. Wordsworth, *Peter Bell*, 304-5.

## MR. COLERIDGE'S LECTURES

Unsigned. First reprinted by Waller and Glover.

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206. *Mr. Coleridge, in his prospectus.* This course of Lectures began on Jan. 27, and ended on March 13, 1818. Hazlitt was lecturing on Poetry at the same time. For Coleridge's prospectus see *Lectures on Shakespeare* ed. Ashe, p. 170.  
 'Those fair parts,' etc. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 1. 20.
207. 'Unhouselled' [unhoused], etc. *Othello*, i. 2. 26.  
 'This island's mine,' etc. *The Tempest*, i. 2. 331.  
 'Independently of his conduct,' etc. Cf. vol. vii. p. 261.  
 'He had peopled else,' etc. *The Tempest*, i. 2. 331.  
 'Lunes and abstractions.' 'Lunes' is in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, iv. 2. 22.
208. 'Conquering and to conquer.' *Revelation*, vi. 2.  
*Bertram.* Cf. vol. xvi. p. 138, etc.  
*Represented to the life at the Royal Circus.* I.e. Astley's. This performance of Coleridge's play appears to have escaped his biographers.  
 'Tedious and brief.' *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 56.  
 'The man may indeed be a reviewer,' etc. See ante, p. 198 and note.
209. 'Fie, Sir!' etc. Milman, *Fazio*, Act II. Scene 1.  
 'To leave this keen encounter,' etc. *Richard III.*, i. 2. 115.  
 'Reason [reasons] as plenty [plentiful],' etc. 1 *Henry IV.*, ii. 4. 264.  
 'The inconstant moon.' *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 2. 109.
210. 'His large discourse of reason,' etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 2. 156 and iv. 4. 36.  
*Squat like a toad.* Unacknowledged from *Paradise Lost*, iv. 800.

## THE EDITOR OF THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

Unsigned. Written on the appearance of the *Quarterly's* attack on *Characters of Shakespear's Plays*, in June, in the issue dated January (see the present editor's *Life*, pp. 256, 264). When the *Quarterly* renewed its attack on the *Lectures on the English Poets*, Hazlitt made this article the starting-point of his *Letter to Gifford*. See vol. ix. pp. 13-17, and notes thereto.

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

### MR. WORDSWORTH AND THE WESTMORELAND ELECTION

A communication, signed 'Peterkin.' Now first reprinted.

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213. *In this contest.* In which Brougham unsuccessfully contested one of the two seats for the county, against Lord Lowther and his brother, Colonel Lowther. Leigh Hunt's leading article of July 5 was devoted to the election.  
*Mr. Wordsworth . . . at one time considered.* See the preface to second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1801).  
*'To mock his own grinning.'* Cf. *Hamlet*, v. 1. 202.  
*Letter to Mr. Gray.* *A Letter to a Friend of Robert Burns* (1816). Cf. *Lectures on the English Poets*, vol. v. p. 128.  
*The first number of the Encyclopedia Metropolitana.* To which Coleridge contributed the 'general introduction,' a 'Preliminary Treatise on Method,' the arrangements for his continued co-operation in the work breaking down.  
*Dr. Stoddart (who corrects the press for Mr. Coleridge).* We do not seem to hear of this elsewhere.  
*Correspondence with the Duke of Levis.* See vol. vii., note to p. 157.  
*Professional gentleman.* Cf. vol. vii. pp. 262, 289.  
 214. 'Excellent senseless.' Unidentified.

### ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

Unsigned. First reprinted in *New Writings: Second Series*.

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214. *Sir F. Burdett.* Sir Francis Burdett (1770-1844), Radical politician and member for Westminster 1807-37. See *The Spirit of the Age*.  
 —. The name of William Mudford (1782-1848) should, no doubt, be understood as filling this blank. After a term on the *Morning Chronicle*, where Hazlitt seems to have displaced him as dramatic critic and incurred his enmity for his pains, Mudford became assistant-editor and later editor of the *Tory Courier*. Decidedly one of Hazlitt's *bêtes noires*—'Him of the *Courier*, the Contemplative Man'—he published in 1811 *The Contemplatist, Essays upon Morals and Literature*, no doubt the work alluded to in the text. Cf. vol. viii. p. 196 and note.  
*A perfect Scrub.* See Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem*.  
 215. 'Ob! for a Muse of flesh [fire].' Henry V., Prologue 1.  
*'And scribbles, as he sits,' etc.* 'And whistled as he went, for want of thought.'  
*Dryden, Cymon and Iphigenia*, 85.  
*'The leading journal in Europe.'* *The Times'* self-description.  
*'Weigh them,' etc.* *Measure for Measure*, iv. ii. 31.  
*The .....* *The Courier*.  
*'Fair, large ears.'* *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, iv. i. 4.

### CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS

Now first reprinted.

Unsigned. An omission from vol. xvi., to which see introductory note (p. 421). I have no doubt that this article, on a subject more ordinarily dealt with for *The Edinburgh Review* by Brougham or Sydney Smith, was undertaken by Hazlitt at the instance of Basil Montagu, a witness before the Select Committee, and editor of



## NOTES

*The Opinions of Different Authors upon the Punishment of Death* (2 vols., 1809). A portion of an earlier paper by Hazlitt on the same subject, also written for Montagu, is printed later in the present volume (*ante*, pp. 324-9).

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217. 'The language of rhetoric,' etc. Unidentified.  
 'To burst upon us like a Levanter.' Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 69).  
 'Give forked counsel.' Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, Act 1. Scene 1.  
 'Though improvement be improvement,' etc.  
     'Though that his joy be joy,  
     Yet throw such changes of vexation on't  
     As it may lose some colour.'  
*Othello*, 1. i. 71-3.
- A great master-mind (now no more). Lord Ellenborough, Lord Chief Justice, who died in 1818. Cf. vol. vii. p. 139 and note.
218. A quarter from which it comes with the least prejudicial effect. This reference is no doubt to Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor, whose consistent opposition to the amelioration of the penal laws is alluded to in *The Spirit of the Age* (vol. xi. pp. 141 *et seq.*).  
*Memoirs of Granville Sharp*. By Prince Hoare, published 1820.
220. 'Our final hope,' etc. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, II. 142-3.
221. 'Prefer custom before all excellence.' Cf. vol. xiii. p. 76.
222. 'What to follow,' etc. Unidentified.  
 Beccaria. Cesare, Marchese de Beccaria (1735?-1794), whose famous work, *On Crimes and Punishments*, appeared in 1764.
243. 'A nice little book.' See vol. vii., note to p. 196.
245. 'Scorning to wince or whine.' Unidentified.
246. *Omne tulit punctum*. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 343.  
 'The toys of desperation.' *Hamlet*, 1. 4. 75.
247. 'The fantastic tricks which man,' etc. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, II. 2. 118-21.
248. 'With shrieks like mandrakes.' *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. 3. 48.
252. 'Golden opinions to [from] all sorts of people.' *Macbeth*, 1. 7. 33.  
 'It snows of bank-notes.' Cf. 'It snowed of meat and drink,' *Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, 345, quoted more than once by Hazlitt.
253. Swift's *Short Way with the Dissenters*. A slip for 'Defoe's,' presumably. Cf. vol. xvi. p. 366.
254. 'Turn askance,' etc.  
     'Aside the Devil turned  
     For envy, yet with jealous leer malign  
     Ey'd them askance.'  
*Paradise Lost*, IV. 501-3.
254. Mrs. Fry. Elizabeth Fry, née Gurney (1780-1845), Quaker philanthropist and prison reformer.  
 Buxton on Prison Discipline. Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786-1845), brewer and philanthropist, created a baronet in 1840. His *Inquiry whether Crime and Misery are produced or prevented by our present system of Prison Discipline* went into five editions on its publication in 1818.
255. 'Corinthian capitals of polished society.' Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 164).  
 'Do good by stealth,' etc. Pope, *Epilogue to Satires*, 1. 135.

# POLITICAL CRITICISM

## ON THE SPIRIT OF MONARCHY

Unsigned. Reprinted by Hazlitt's son in *Literary Remains* (1836). Also reprinted as a pamphlet twice (1) by T. Philp, Falmouth (?1822, unauthorised), and (2) with Godwin's 'The Moral Effects of Aristocracy,' by Wakelin, Shoe Lane (? 1835). See Keynes, *Bibliography*, 1931.

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256. *Wisely and wittily observed.* By Leigh Hunt. See 'Definition of Wit' in vol. xx.

'And by the vision,' etc. Wordsworth, 'Intimations of Immortality,' 73-4.

*The madman in Hogarth. The Rake's Progress*, Plate viii.

'There goes,' etc. Cf. vol. xvii. p. 43 and note.

*We once heard, etc.* This allusion is to William Roscoe (1753-1831), the well-known historian. See *Conversations of Northcote* (vol. xi. p. 241 and note).

257. *Says Swift.* Cf. ante, p. 124.

*Mr. Young. Cf. A View of the English Stage*, and Hazlitt's dramatic criticisms in vol. xviii.

'That within,' etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 2. 85.

'To fear,' etc. *Othello*, i. 2. 71.

*Voltaic Battery.* Invented by Alessandro Volta (1745-1826).

*Metallic Tractors.* 'A device consisting of a pair of pointed rods of different metals, as brass and steel, which were believed to relieve rheumatic or other pain by being drawn or rubbed over the skin.'—*N.E.D.*

258. 'Peep through,' etc. *Macbeth*, i. 5. 54.

'Great is Diana,' etc. *Acts*, xix. 28.

'Your gods,' etc. Cf. *S. Matthew*, xiii. 13.

Note. Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, i. 100-3.

259. *In contempt of their worshippers.* Cf. *Burke, Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 17).

'Gods partial,' etc. Pope, *An Essay on Man*, iii. 257-8.

260. 'Any mark,' etc. Cf. i *Henry IV.*, iii. 2. 45.

Note. Hazlitt quotes a passage from his own essay, 'What is the People?' reprinted in *Political Essays*. See vol. vii. p. 274 and notes.

261. 'From the crown,' etc. Cf. *Isaiah*, i. 6.

*Virtue, says Montesquieu, etc. Esprit des Lois*, iii. 6.

'Honour dishonourable.' *Paradise Lost*, iv. 314-15.

'Of outward shew,' etc. Cf. *Ibid.*, viii. 538-9.

262. 'To tread,' etc. *Hamlet*, i. 3. 50.

'Nice customs,' etc. *Henry V.*, v. 2. 293.

'In form and motion,' etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 317.

'Vice is undone,' etc. Pope, *Epilogue to the Satires*, i. 142-9.

Note. 'The same luck holds,' etc. Unidentified.

263. *A constitutional king, etc.* Hazlitt's success in 'getting away' with this passage will be admired, as he appears to have admired it himself. Cf. the *Plain Speaker* essay, 'On the Jealousy and the Spleen of Party' (vol. xii. p. 379). He preferred apparently, however, the essay 'On the Regal Character,' vol. vii. pp. 281-7, for reprinting in *Paris Table-Talk*.

*A Coronation day.* The coronation of George iv. had taken place on July 19, 1821.

264. *Prince Leopold.* Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg (1790-1865), who had married the Princess Charlotte, and afterwards (1831) became King of the Belgians.

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264. *Castlereagh . . . unstained, etc.* Castlereagh committed suicide on Aug. 12, 1822.  
 'A present deity,' etc. Dryden, *Alexander's Feast*, 35-6.  
 265. 'Worth makes the man,' etc. Pope, *An Essay on Man*, IV. 203-4.  
 'The only amaranthine flower,' etc. Cowper, *The Task*, III. 268-9.  
 266. 'A man may read,' etc. *Holy Dying*, chap. i. § 2.

### ARGUING IN A CIRCLE

Unsigned. First reprinted by Hazlitt's son in *The Round Table* (1841).

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267. 'Fancies and good nights.' Cf. 2 *Henry IV.*, III. 2. 342.  
 'Base cullionly fellow.' Not quite Shakespearean. Cf. 2 *Henry VI.*, I. 3. 43, and *King Lear*, II. 2. 36.  
 'Beggarily, unmannered corse.' Cf. 1 *Henry IV.*, I. 3. 44.  
 'The age of chivalry,' etc. Cf. Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 89).  
 'The melancholy Jacques,' etc. *As You Like It*, II. 1.  
 268. *The present Duke of Buckingham.* Richard Temple Nugent Brydges Chandos, created Duke of Buckingham and Chandos in February 1822.  
 'New manners,' etc. Thomas Warton, Sonnet, *Written in a Blank Leaf of Dugdale's Monasticon*.  
 'Submits,' etc. Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 90).  
 269. 'Long insulted,' etc. Quoted elsewhere: vol. XIII. p. 46, etc.  
 'With jealous leer malign.' *Paradise Lost*, IV. 503.  
 'The last example of democratic rebellion.' See vol. VII., footnote to p. 148.  
 270. *We pretend to have interfered, etc.* Cf. *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIII. p. 92).  
 'Cause was bearded.' Cf. *Othello*, I. 3. 373.  
 'The open and apparent shame,' etc. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, X. 112-13.  
 'The shame, the blood,' etc. Cf. 2 *Samuel*, I. 16.  
 271. *The Editor of the New Times.* Dr. Stoddart.  
 'Make the worse,' etc. *Paradise Lost*, II. 114.  
 'So musical,' etc. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV. I. 123.  
 272. 'So well the tempter glozed.' Cf. *Paradise Lost*, IX. 549.  
*A spring-nailed, velvet-pawed tyger-cat.* Cf. ante, note to p. 178.  
*Mr. Canning's present . . . situation.* Canning had become Foreign Secretary in 1822, and had shortly afterwards acknowledged the independence of the Spanish American Colonies.  
 273. 'Turn-spit of the king's kitchen.' Burke, 'Speech on Economical Reform' (Bohn, II. 85-6).  
 'Undoing all,' etc. 2 *Henry VI.*, I. I. 103.  
 'Though that their joy,' etc. Cf. *Othello*, I. I. 71.  
 'Blotted out of the map of Europe.' See vol. XV., note to p. 154.  
 'Ugly customer.' Colloquial.  
 274. 'Like an exhalation,' etc. See vol. X., note to p. 32.  
 'Ride in the whirlwind,' etc. Addison, *The Campaign*, and Pope, *The Dunciad*, III. 264.  
*The letters that passed between him . . . and Barry the painter.* See Barry, *Works*, 1809.  
 275. 'Winged words.' *Iliad*, XX. 331.  
*Noctes, etc.* Horace, *Satires*, II. vi. 65.  
 'The beautiful,' etc. Coleridge, *The Death of Wallenstein*, Act V. Scene 1.

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

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276. *Intus et in cute.* Persius, *Satires*, III. 30.  
 'A thick scurf.' 'Like a thick scurf o'er life.' Middleton, *The Witch*, Act 1.  
 Sc. 2.  
 'Sweet smelling gums.' *Paradise Lost*, XI. 327.  
*He writes such Odes on kings, etc.* The reference is to Byron's 'Vision of Judgment,' published in *The Liberal*, No. 1.  
 'Dews of Castalie.' Cf. Spenser, *The Ruines of Time*, 431.  
 277. *The Six Acts.* Passed by Lord Sidmouth in 1819 after the Manchester reform meeting.  
*The propriety of punishing the second conviction for libel with banishment.* See vol. VII., note to p. 170, and *ante*, p. 175 and note.

## QUERIES ADDRESSED TO POLITICAL ECONOMISTS

'From a Correspondent,' unsigned. Now first reprinted.

This and the following paper form Hazlitt's only contributions to *The Examiner* during this year, and have been previously overlooked. He was much interested towards the end of his life in the conclusions of the 'classical' or 'abstract' school of economists, and is here and in following papers giving the results of his study of Ricardo's *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1817), Mill's *Elements of Political Economy* (1821-2), and MacCulloch's *Principles of Political Economy* (1825).

## HINTS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

'From a Correspondent,' unsigned. Now first reprinted.

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284. 'A consummation,' etc. *Hamlet*, III. 1. 63.  
 285. Note. *When I walk along the streets of London, etc.* Hazlitt was writing this paper, however, in Paris, where he resided continuously from July 1826 to October 1827. See introductory note to *The Life of Napoleon* (vol. XIII.).  
 286. *Absenteeism.* See John Ramsay MacCulloch's evidence given before a committee of the House of Commons, 1826.  
*Lady Morgan.* Who was, presumably, married to an absentee landlord. See vol. XII., note to p. 220.  
 287. *Where the carcass is, etc.* Cf. *S. Matthew*, xxiv. 28.  
*Mr. Huskisson.* William Huskisson (1770-1830), President of the Board of Trade, 1823-7. The reference is to his attempts to benefit the silk trade by abolishing the restrictions upon it, including the practice of fixing wages of Spitalfields weavers by an order of the magistrates. In 1826 foreign silks were admitted for the first time, subject to a duty.  
 'No better than a house-breaker.' Southey's expression. Cf. vol. VII. p. 196, etc.  
*Chimney-sweeper decked out as a Jack-of-the-Green.* See vol. VII., note to p. 244, and vol. X., note to p. 213.  
 'Miraturque novos fructus,' etc. Cf. Virgil, *Georgics*, II. 82.  
*His editor, Mr. Montagu.* See *ante*, introductory note to the article 'Capital Punishments.' Montagu's edition of the *Works* of Bacon began publication in 1825 and was completed in 16 volumes in 1836. His additional publications on the subject of capital punishment were *Inquiries respecting the Punishment of Death for Crimes without Violence* (1818) and *The Rise and Progress of the Mitigation of the Punishment of Death* (1822).

## NOTES

### ILLUSTRATIONS OF TORYISM

Unsigned. Now first reprinted.

This contribution to James Silk Buckingham's weekly newspaper, *The Sphynx*, is identified by means of a reference in a letter of January 18, 1828, from Hazlitt at Winterslow to Henry Leigh Hunt, publisher with Cowden Clarke of *The Life of Napoleon*: 'I won't send Clarke any more of my Georgics—Buckingham bad' an article the day before, which I dare say he has yet, unless he has given it to Colburn to keep. . . . I won't send any more to B., unless he *remits*, which he does not seem inclined to do.' (Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's text, *The Hazlitts*, 1911, i. 487.) Examination of the files of Buckingham's newspapers at this date (*The Sphynx* and *The Athenæum*) reveals this as evidently the article in question. That Hazlitt was still unpaid for it, and consequently wrote no more, we may gather from an *Examiner* reference of the following June. See his dramatic criticism in vol. xviii. p. 412 and note.

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288. '*The Author of Waverley.*' Scott's *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, 'by the Author of Waverley, &c.', was published in 1827. Hazlitt is writing this article after a perusal of the fourth volume at the same moment that he was engaged in putting the first two volumes of his own *Life* to press. See vol. xiii., introductory note.

'*Such was the celebrated compact,*' etc. Scott, *Life of Napoleon*, iv. 340.

289. '*The sentiments of the Princes,*' etc. *Ibid.*, iv. 319.

'*He inquired anxiously into abuses,*' etc. *Ibid.*, iv. 347.

290. '*With a similar and more laudable attention,*' etc. *Ibid.*, iv. 347.

*Monge.* Gaspard Monge (1746–1818), the famous mathematician, who accompanied Napoleon to Egypt on his scientific commission.

### DEFINITION

Unsigned. Now first reprinted.

Hazlitt's association with *The Atlas* (for which see introductory note to vol. xx) provided him with everything except a political platform. The present aphorism and the article which follows, like the great majority of his contributions, are identified on internal evidence.

### THE TITHES

Unsigned. Now first reprinted.

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294. '*Overseer in Bridewell.*' *The Harlot's Progress*, Plate iv.

*The term 'Parson.'* Cf. vol. vii. p. 351 and note.

### OUTLINES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

In January 1828 Hazlitt offered to David Constable of Edinburgh for the newly-founded *Constable's Miscellany* 'a little volume of outlines or elements of the following subjects. 1. Of Law. 2. Of Morals. 3. Of the Human Mind. 4. Of Taste. 5. Of Political Economy. 6. Of English Grammar. On all of these but the fifth, I have something new to offer.' (*Life*, p. 397.) The book was not published, but a

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

number of the papers which were to form it exist, in rough draft, in the possession of Mr. A. C. Goodyear. The present paper was first printed in *The London Mercury* for June 1926, and reprinted in *New Writings: Second Series*. The present text has been newly prepared from the manuscript.

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294. *A critical essay*. See vol. xi., note to p. 211.  
*Rossini*. Gioachino Antonio Rossini (1792-1868), much fêted on his visit to London in 1817.
295. *Has been compared*. By Coleridge in *The Friend*. Cf. vol. vii. p. 225 and note.
296. *Mr. Southey says*. Cf. vol. vii. p. 222.
299. '*We cannot give up our Hell*.' Unidentified.  
*Mr. Gurney*. Sir Goldsworthy Gurney (1793-1875), inventor of the high-pressure steam-jet, conducted his first 'steam-carriage' experiments on the public roads in 1827-8.
300. *The Corinthian capital of polished society*. See *ante*, note to p. 255.  
*I asked a labouring peasant*. At or near Winterslow, no doubt, where he was writing.
301. *Mr. Burke says*. 'They can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year; and cannot conceive why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl, or that squire.' Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 123).  
*Tom Paine says*. *The Rights of Man*, 1791, p. 76.
302. *The corn laws*. Repealed in 1846.  
*What room they can out of them*. A fifth section, headed 'Poor-laws,' is begun in the MS., but consists of rough notes which have been struck through by the pen of Hazlitt or his son, whose attempt to prepare the MS. for the printer is in evidence throughout.

## PROJECT FOR A NEW THEORY, ETC.

First printed by Hazlitt's son in *Literary Remains* (1836), and again, in amplified form, without explanation, in *Winterslow* (1850). The second text is here reprinted. The essay is probably identical with Hazlitt's projected 'Outlines of Law' (see introductory note to the preceding article), and may have been recast by him in its present form on the abandonment of the proposed volume for Constable.

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302. *Mr. Currie*. Sic in Hazlitt's son's text. For John Currie (1769-1839) see Mr. H. W. Stephenson's *Hazlitt and Hackney College*, 1930.
303. *The Test and Corporation Acts*. Repealed in May 1828.
307. '*I am monarch*,' etc. Cowper, 'Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk.'  
'*Founded as the rock*.' *Macbeth*, iii. 4. 22.  
*Mr. Burke talks*, etc. Cf. *On the Sublime and Beautiful* (Bohn, *Works*, i. 168-9).
309. '*There's no divinity*,' etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 123.  
*Mr. Macculloch in his Essay on Wages*. *An Essay on the Circumstances which determine the Rate of Wages and condition of the Labouring Classes*. (1826.)  
'*Throw your bread*,' etc. Cf. *Ecclesiastes*, xi. 1.  
*There are four things*, etc. It will be noticed that this sequence is not very logically followed in Hazlitt's son's text, which would presumably have received the author's further revision.

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310. *Mr. Owen's new map of improvements.* Cf. vol. xi. p. 14, and vol. xii. p. 129. 'While this machine,' etc. *Hamlet*, II. 2. 124.  
 312. *A little town in Shropshire.* Wem, of course.  
 313. *Wicksteed.* For the association of the Hazlitt and Wicksteed families see the late Professor Herford's *Philip Henry Wicksteed*, 1931.  
 317. 'Like the wild goose,' etc. *As You Like It*, II. 7. 86.  
 'The marble air,' etc. Cf. 'Through the pure marble air.' *Paradise Lost*, III. 564.

## EMANCIPATION OF THE JEWS

First printed in Leigh Hunt's *The Tatler*, March 28, 1831, 'by William Hazlitt,' from which it is here reprinted. Also published separately as a pamphlet, which has not, however, been seen by the present editor. A copy in the possession of the late Mr. Bertram Dobell is said to have borne the following (anonymous) marginal note: 'Written by Hazlitt, and a little altered by Mr. Basil Montagu—Mr. Isaac Goldsmid caused this little tract to be written, and defrayed all the expenses of authorship, printing, &c. It was the last production, I think, of Hazlitt's pen.' Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid (1778-1859), financier and philanthropist, was created the first Jewish baronet in 1841. It was through his efforts that the first Jewish Disabilities Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on May 23, 1830, in connection with which event this article was probably written.

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320. 'We have reformed,' etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, III. 2. 40.  
*The emancipation of the Jews.* Which was not effected, owing to the opposition of the House of Lords, until 1858.  
 321. 'My kingdom,' etc. *S. Jobn*, xviii. 36.  
 322. 'And pure religion,' etc. Wordsworth, Sonnet, 'Written in London, September 1802.'  
 323. *How truly it has been said.* I have not identified the authorship of the passage which Hazlitt quotes.

## ON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH

First printed in *Fraser's Magazine* for January 1831, in the course of an (anonymous) article on Capital Punishment. The extract is thus introduced: 'It forms part of an essay which was written a few years ago by the late W. Hazlitt, at the request of a society then existing in London for obtaining a repeal of that formidable law, and seems to contain pretty much the sum of what might be brought forward against that punishment by a philosophical reasoner. It has never yet been published.' The date of the composition of the essay in question is given by a shorthand entry of Crabb Robinson's in the unpublished portion of his *Diary*: 'Sept. 8, 1812:—Called on [Anthony] Robinson, with whom I spent a very pleasant two hours. W. H., he told me, some time ago borrowed of him £30, promising to repay it in a fortnight when he was to receive his money in the Society for Abolishing Capital Punishment. However, several fortnights have elapsed, and he has never heard from or seen H. since. Such are the difficulties from which great talents alone, without discretion, will never relieve a man.' (Mr. R. T. Herford's transcript, Dr. Williams' Library.) For Hazlitt's monetary difficulties at this date, before his adoption of the career of journalism, see the present editor's *Life*. The Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge upon the Punishment of Death, which is no doubt that referred to, was founded by Basil Montagu in 1809.

## POLITICAL CRITICISM

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324. *Beccaria*. See *ante*, note to p. 222.  
 'It is not the intensity,' etc. Cf. *Beccaria, On Crimes and Punishments*, chap. xxviii.  
 325. '*Crimes are more effectually prevented*,' etc. *Ibid.*, chap. xxvii.  
 328. *In Mr. Bentham's phrase*. See (e.g.) *Theory of Legislation*, Part III. chap. vi.  
 329. Note. For Burgh's book see *A Reply to Malthus*, vol. 1. pp. 85 *et seq.* and notes.

## PERSONAL POLITICS

Written in August 1830, and probably, with the exception of the essay 'The Letter Bell' (vol. xvii.), the last production of Hazlitt's pen. First printed by his son in *Literary Remains*, from which it is here reprinted.

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329. '*Ay, every inch a king!*' *King Lear*, iv. 6. 109.  
*The Restoration under a charter*. See vol. xvii., note to p. 208.  
 'Cooped,' etc. Cf. *Macbeth*, III. 4. 24.  
 330. '*Himself again*.' *Richard III.* (Cibber's version), Act v. Sc. 3.  
 331. '*Solely sovereign sway and masterdom*,' etc. *Macbeth*, I. 5. 71.  
 332. '*Shall be in him*,' etc. Cf. *Othello*, III. 3. 469-70.  
*Mild paternal sway*. See *ante*, note to p. 128.  
 'Smile and smile,' etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, I. 5. 108.  
 'Ever strong,' etc. *King John*, III. 1. 117.  
 334. *The late King*. George IV. died on June 26, 1830.  
*Let him go where he chooses*. Charles X. arrived in England on Aug. 17, 1830.  
 Note. '*The unquenchable flame*,' etc. 'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.' *S. Mark*, ix. 44.





